

MISS SLIMMENS'S BOARDING-HOUSE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE TALLOW FAMILY."

(Continued from page 150.)



CHAPTER V.

CONFIDENTIAL, BETWEEN MISS SLIMMENS AND
HERSELF.

It seems to me as if everything had gone wrong since that night of the fire. There's always something sly going on between them provoking, sassy young fellows. I don't believe I can ever pull the wool over their eyes again, after that flannel night-cap. It's only last night at tea, Mr. Little asked to borrow it. He said he'd heard his friend Mrs. Partington had taken rheumatism in her head, and he wanted to send her the pattern. Even Bridget must cut up like the rest of 'em, and give warning that she's going away, because I wouldn't allow her to have "a follower." What does *she* want of a follower, I'd like to know? Here she's got as many as three after her, and I—who've been trying for twenty years, haven't made out yet! The ugly, homely, impertinent Irish thing! let her go, with her string of followers after her! I won't sit solitary in my bodoor, of evenings, thinking of my lonesomeness, and hear her giggling and flirting with her beaux in the kitchen. It makes me desperate. Let her go, I say. I'll hire a girl so old, and humbly, and cross that nobody'll think of speaking to her. Besides, how do I know what Bridget may be giving to them creatures? She treats 'em, of course. I missed a piece of mince-pie last week, and I've no lock on the tea-caddy yet, though I've a pretty sharp eye to it. And there's Dora been crying and pouting around so I've been obliged to ask her back to the first table, and keep her in the parlor more of evenings—not that I care for her

doleful face, but she will be telling Mr. Little that I don't treat her well, and then there'll be trouble in the camp. I'm *awful* afraid she will catch him yet! It looks like it. But she mus'n't, and she *sha'n't*, if I have to tell fibs to break it up.

O dear me! I do look terrible old—there's no denying it. I can paint my cheeks, but I can't fill up the hollows. I do wish them French folks that understand such things so well would invent something to fill up the wrinkles. I'd pay any price, for I feel it is "now or never," "sink or swim," "live or die." It went all over me last evening, when Mr. Barker was singing the Rover's Song—

"This night, or never, my bride thou shalt be!"

Why won't somebody give me such a chance as that? I'd go, if it rained pitchforks, and I had to climb out a six-story window, and slide down a rope ladder to reach his arms. I'd risk everything, even my refutation, I'm getting so responding.

Howsomever, if I can't make love, I can make money, and I will. Maybo money will buy what female charms won't. It's a very good thing to depend on, in case of an immergency. I've thirteen boarders now, and there's that new one coming to-morrow. I've calculated pretty closely, and, if I find there's nothing to be lost by it, I'll calculate closer still. They're mighty pert, now, some of 'em; and I don't know how much more schinoling they'll bear, without quitting the house; but I'll try the experiment as far as will do. When Mr. Little was in one of his funny tantrums yesterday, I told him I thought he found a great deal to

amuse him. "Yes," he said, "he laughed to grow fat! He'd as soon get fat by laughing as by eating, and if he couldn't get what he paid for in the provision line, he was going to take it out in the cashinatory"—though what he meant by that I don't quite understand. "Miss Slimmens," said he, looking at me as solemn as the grave, "we pay four dollars a week apiece for the inestimable privilege of being members of your family. What we *eat* is a secondary consideration. I would recommend your establishment to dyspeptics, for two reasons: firstly, the richness and variety of the cullendary spread will not impair their digestive facilities, while the inducements to chaolnatory exercise will very much invigorate them. Ahem! Miss Slimmens, it is indeed a privilege to be one of your interesting family. I should love to be considered as a son—as one of your own children—that is, of course, if you were a married lady, as you should be"—and the impudent rogue looked so handsome and polite all the while, as if he thought I didn't reprehend him. I saw him stealing glances at Dora. He didn't get any sugar in his tea, to pay for *that* speech, but he didn't dare to ask for any. How he and the new boarder will get along together I can't guess. He's so full of his deviltry, and the new one told me he was studying for the ministry at the Seminary. I knew he was, the minnit I sot eyes on him, with his gingham necktie, and his forlorn pantaloons, and his yellow hair sticking up so straight in front, and his meek voice. He thought I ought to take him for less than the regular price, on account of his calling; and I've consented to do it, for he's young and green, not used to ladies' society, and so innocent there's no telling what influence might be gained over him by a woman who has had practice. It's much more probable I could bring him to propose than Mr. Little, and if one pays a dollar a week less than the other, I've my own reasons for it. If the student should be shocked by the gay conversation of any of my other boarders, it'll be time enough then to make up my mind as to chances. "Never despair!" is my motto, and I'll act up to it a while longer, though I've felt heartsick and discouraged lately, 'specially since the fire. I've been dreadfully low-spirited, and that's made the wrinkles show plainer than ever. I've felt awful ugly, and I'm afraid I showed out my temper rather *too* plain once or twice. It's hard to keep in forever, year after year, when one has as much to exasperate them as I've had.

As I said before, I'll make money, any how.

I laid by twenty dollars last week, clear profits; which was partly owing to my getting that butter for fifteen cents a pound, and partly to Mr. Greyson being gone three days for which no reduction was made, and partly to my giving up having biscuits or sass for tea. It's two dollars more 'n I've made any previous week. And now let me see how matters stand for *this* week. Ten boarders at four dollars a week would be forty dollars, and them three clerks in the back room at three and a half would be ten and a half, which would be fifty dollars and fifty cents, income, and it's all paid, every sixpence of it. Alvira Slimmens doesn't go on the trust principle. "Get as much as you can, and give as little in return" is the only principle upon which to do business if a person wishes to prosper in this world. Then there was Barker had that young man here once to dinner and twice to tea, for which I added seventy-five cents to the bill; and as the young man was so bashful that he didn't eat six mouthfuls, I consider it a clear profit of fifty cents. Then there was that dish Bridget broke; I paid thirty-five cents for it when it was new. It had been in use two years, and I reduced half a dollar out of her wages—profit, fifteen cents. Then there was that turkey and that pair of geese which was so old that I made Farmer Goodman take off three shillings when we come to settle, though the age was certainly in my favor, as it took the boarders two meals to get through with 'em. Mr. Little wished I'd lend him my teeth, he said, cause if they got broke they could be replaced easier than his 'n. Now let me look at my expense book!

Income, \$51 52. Outgoes:—

Rent,	\$ 5 00
Fuel,	3 50
Bridget's wages,	1 00
Washerwoman's (paid in broken vittals),	0 00
Butcher,	2 75
Salt fish,	1 37
Eggs and chickens,	88
Groceries and stores,	10 00
Wood sawyer,	50
Hole wore in dining-room carpet,	50
Apples passed round Sunday evening,	10
Pie-plate cracked,	3
Candles,	75
Pigeon sent to Mr. Greyson's room the day he was sick,	10
Total,	\$26 81
Income,	51 52
Profit,	\$24 71

Well, I declare! better and better! I don't want no better business than keeping boarders so long as they all pay up, and everything goes along as slick as it does now. Wouldn't that "minister in emory," as they say, open his eyes if I should give him a glimpse at the state of affairs. A prospect of a partnership in as money-making an establishment as this *ought* to be very engaging to a poor young man, with his way to make in the world. If he had money, he could do a great deal of good—that is, if he got the handling of it, which is a matter to be settled afterwards.

I s'pose I must make Dora a present of a new dress before Christmas. The child is rather shabby, that's a fact! and she purked up the other day and told me she'd rather go out as a hired girl, and know what she *did* earn, than never to have nothing she could consider her own; if her services were of any value, she wished I'd settle how much, if it wasn't more than fifty cents a week, and let her have it to spend as she liked. I'd have to hire another girl, if I let her go, and I don't think she costs me a dollar a week for clothes; besides, she keeps some of them young men here, I know. She's a pretty girl, there's no denying—modest, too. I'd give my whole possessions to be half as young and good looking. Sometimes I think I'd stand a better chance if she wasn't around, and then again, I'm afraid my boarders would go off, and I shouldn't stand any chance at all.

I've half a mind to get her a blue merino. I could well afford it; but then a Thibet will look just as well at less cost. I'll get her a blue Thibet, and give her that black velvet cape of mine to cut up to trim it with. O dear! I wish I stood in her shoes, shabby as they are!

CHAPTER VI.

SHE GETS AN INVITATION TO THE CONCERT.

THERE'S to be a concert in town, this evening, gentlemen. The bill was thrown in the yard yesterday, and it's in the *Eagle* this morning. I suppose you've all noticed it. "The admired and celebrated Madame Frizzolinda, assisted at the piano by Herr Blitzengruntz." Foreigners, you see, which will be so delightful, as Pennyville is but seldom honored by a visit from genuine stars which have ariz and shone in a foreign firmament. I wonder what she calls him *Herr* Blitzengruntz for? Perhaps she owns him, or has some special claims upon him. 'Tany rate it sounds pleasant;

it must be charming for a woman to possess some one that she can call all her own. O dear! I'm so rejoiced that there's going to be such a splendid affair once more in our quiet little villago! We've a great deal of musical taste here, don't you think so, Mr. Barker? Yus, I'm rejoiced—though not on my own account. It's nothing to me, personally; but I sympathize with those who will be permitted to be present. A lady situated as I am can hardly dare to attend such a place without an escort, and of course I do not expect an invitation. The thralls which are wove about the feminine sex are very impeding. Here's myself and my pardner Dora will have to forego the pleasure of an innocent and soul-exalting entertainment because we belong to that feeblor sex which costume has impelled to lean upon the arm of men for guidance and support. I suppose, if I were a little older, and had a more matronly appearance, I might venture to take Dora and go together; but as it is, nobody'd know which was sisserone and which wasn't. It would only be a dollar for the two, if we didn't take reversed seats, which I'm sure I shouldn't care for. I'd rather "face the music," as Mr. Little observes so foolishly. I don't care so much for myself, neither, though I'm very fond of music, as you all know; but Dora, poor thing, has really set her heart upon going, though she hasn't been asked, and if she had, she says she wouldn't go and leave me in solitary refinement at home.

Did you inquire, Mr. Bethuen, if it was a sacred concert? No, not exactly. It couldn't be called a *sacred* concert, though I see in the diagram there's an extract from Hannibal's "Messiah;" but I presume it's all of a character opprobrious enough for a ministerial student to listen to. Good music has an elevating tendency, whether it's of a sectarian character or not. But I must not allow myself to dwell upon this theme any longer. Won't you have some more coffee, Mr. Greyson? I really wish you would! and a little more of the beefsteak; it's tender-line. I bespoke tender-line this morning, as I know beefsteak and coffee are strengthening and sustaining, and their uniting influence may enable an invalid like yourself to brave the evening air, provided you should happen to wish to go out this evening. Oh, yes, Mr. Little, certainly! help yourself freely. It ought to be good, for I paid a cent on a pound more than common for it.

Of course you'll attend the concert, Mr. Barker? and you, Mr. White? You've both such musical overtures, yourselves, that you'll

able to depreciate all the excellencies of the occasion. But, as I said before, I must not allow myself to dwell on this theme any longer. Since I *can't* attend, the best way is to banish all thoughts of it from my mind. There, Dora, you needn't cry, if you are disappointed. You ain't a crying! Well, you look as if you wanted to, and I'm sure I don't blame you. If you *should* cry, it wouldn't be on account of the concert as much as on account of some people's want of delicacy? Poor child! I don't wonder you feel some of the slights to which the orphan and the brotherless are exposed. If you had a brother now, he'd—take some other girl, of course, if he was a sensible man, and allow *you* the privilege of escorting Miss Adams—what a witty person you ever are, Mr. Little. I'm glad Dora's invited, any how, that's one thing off my mind. My own disappointment I don't care about; though I doubt if Dora'll feel at liberty to accept *under the circumstances*. He! ho! Mr. Little, I'm *much* obliged to you, I'm sure. I didn't expect an invitation. Nothing was further from my thoughts. In fact, I hadn't allowed myself to think much about it, as I had no idea of going. But since you're so polite, though I'm extremely reluctant to put you to so much trouble and expense, of course we'll be very happy, Dora and myself—Dora, in particular.

Oh, thank you, we had a delightful time—delightful! I'm very sorry you wasn't there, Mr. Greyson. All the aristocracy of Pennyville was present. You'd have had a fine chance to get a glimpse of our best society under the most favorable auspices. The ladies were mostly without their bonnets, and had their hair dressed as if they was at a party. It had quite a city air, I assure you. I could almost transport myself, in theory, to Boston, or some other great metropolis. Mr. Little obtained us splendid seats, where we could hear and be heard to the best advantage. I was in my elements; I don't know when I have had such a real good time. Madame Frizzolinda was dressed *beautifully*, just as I've read of their being dressed at their operating performances—white satin, with a train, and a crown on her head, and a great big bouquet on her bosom. She looked like an empress. And then her singing was such a treat! I enjoyed it so much I hadn't the heart to be as critical as I usually am. Her localization was superb; her denunciation was equally rapid and brilliant. She ran up and down the scale with the utmost agility. I've always thought

I was pretty good on the high notes, but she went up beyond me. Them Italian pieces she sung was so affecting; I could see it by the way she rolled up her eyes and gasped for breath, though, of course, as I don't understand Italian, I couldn't tell just what it was about. I wish you'd have heard her sing "The Messiah," Mr. Bethuen, though I am afraid you would have disapproved of the style of her dress. They say she's as much as forty years old, but she didn't look more than twenty, last evening. I trust she does not paint, or powder, or try to make herself look more youthful than she is. Such things are very silly, to say nothing of their being sinful; don't you think so, Mr. Bethuen? If I was forty years old, I'd acknowledge it, and let it go at that. But, oh, Herr Blitzengruntz was *perfect*! He came on the platform with *such* an air, and his moustache was so foreign, and he looked about with such self-possession. When he began to play, I trembled for our music-teacher's piano, though I suppose, if it had come to pieces, they would have paid the damages. You know I carried that sweet bouquet Mr. Barker gave me last week, and I was so glad I did! My feelings overcome me so, by the time he'd played his first piece through, that I was just able to toss it at his feet. We sat very near the platform, in a conspicuous position, and I feel quite certain that he saw just who it proceeded from. I was so glad I wore my pink silk dress and my hair in natural curls, without any bonnet—not that I care for the vanities of dress, Mr. Bethuen, but, having long been a resident of Pennyville, I feel a natural pride in having it make a good impression on strangers. When he picked up the bouquet, and looked over the audience, I nodded slightly and smiled, and I think he observed it, for he held the flowers to his bosom with a very impressing manner. I'm sure he will not soon forget Pennyville, nor his reception by the fairer portion of its inhabitants. These Germans are so fascinating! To be sure, he was rather fat, if I may be allowed the term, and his face—what we could see of it—was rather red; but what he lacked in elegance he made up in dignity. He evidently felt his superiority, and he doubtless had good reasons. I, for one, felt ready to yield to all he should require. They're so used to being petted, it spoils them. It must be delightful to be spoiled. Ah, well, they left town this morning, by the ten o'clock stage, and I suppose we shall hear them no more. Pleasure is so effervescent; don't you find it so, Mr. Bethuen? You, whose mind is fixed

upon serial matters, must regard many of these things as vanities. What's that, Mr. Little? No wonder the pleasure Herr Blitzengruntz conferred was effervescent, considering what a barrel of beer he was? He! he! I suppose I must allow you to say all the funny things you want to, since you were so considerate as to take us to the concert, without the least intimacy upon our part, either, that we would like to go. It's very fortunate for Dora that she's with me. It enables her to receive attention she wouldn't get otherwise, and I'm glad of it, for her sake.

Step into my bodeor, Mr. Bethuen; you've not honored it yet by your presence. This is a little retreat, where I go to forget the cares and vexations of life, to fix my mind upon spiritual things, to banish the temperate affairs that must necessarily divert me through much of the day. It is a spot desecrated to devotion. Whenever you are weary of the strife of living, or pained by the noise and jokes of my other boarders, seek refuge in here; you will be ever welcome. Upon this little table reposes a Bible and Hymn Book; here rests my guitar. It is not exactly a sacred instrument, but its strings shall never be profaned by any music which shall jar upon the sensitive chords of your nature. If Mr. Barker and Mr. White persist in singing "Old Uncle Ned," and other specimens of negro minstrelsy, they shall do it in the general parlor.

Though I have not yet united with the church, Mr. Bethuen, you must not suppose that I am indifferent to religious subjects. That I have taken you to board at a dollar a week less than my other boarders, proves the deep interest I take, and the sacrifices I am ready to make in the good cause. I think that if some *friend*—or some one even nearer and dearer than a friend—should make a personal effort in my behalf, I could be brought to take a more saving interest in religion than I have ever yet done. If I were united to some member of the church—united in good works, I mean, of course—doubtless I should soon come into the fold. It's probably been more from youthful thoughtlessness than anything else that I have not hitherto been more decidedly drawn towards the means of conversion. I've no doubt you'll exert a beneficial influence upon the young gentlemen of my family. I feel it a comfort and a privilege to have your countenance, even at the low sum of three dollars a week. You must not mind the air of levity which at times prevails at my table and in my parlor; high spirits is

natural to youth—I indulge in them myself sometimes—unless one feels early that they have a special call, as I suppose you do. Do you sing? we might have some sacred music occasionally. I lead in the choir, you know; I've always sang in the choir since I was a mere child. I hav'n't belonged to the sewing-society lately, owing to some personal misunderstandings between myself and some of the ladies of Pennyville; but I don't feel so hard towards them as I did, I feel more of the forgiving spirit to "love my enemies," and I presume I shall join the circle again, perhaps at their next meeting. Do you attend?—then I shall certainly be there. Excuse me, Mr. Bethuen, but I noticed your collars was getting a little ragged around the edges. Anything I can do for you, you know, I shall consider the same as if I was serving the Lord in any other way. I feel anxious to be doing a little more good in the world. Some persons think they will put off seeking grace until their youth is past, and they are tired of the gayeties of the world; but I do not think I shall be one of those; I shall be thankful to have the way pointed out to me; I shall consider your advice and counsel valueless, and in return, any little sewing, you know, or service of that kind. Here's a couple of pocket-handkerchiefs I've hemmed for you. Oh, no! no! don't thank me; they were only three and sixpence apiece, and I shall feel honored by having them dedicated to the use of the oil-factories of a future minister. Make yourself to home in my bodeor, Mr. Bethuen; I feel anxious to see a good deal of you. Must you go? To prayer-meeting I suppose? If I had time I should accompany you; but there's a great many calls upon my attention, I occupy a difficult position for a person of my years; but I may tell you, as a great secret, mind, Mr. Bethuen, *that I am making money*, and with money one can do a *great deal of good*; don't you think so?

A HEROINE OF TO-DAY.

BY T. S. ARTHUR.

THE blow fell suddenly, and the young husband and father was stricken down ere the smallest provision had been made for the future, stricken down in the morning of his years, ere his loins were fairly girded for the battle of life. A young, frail, inexperienced woman, now a widow, and three little ones, were left behind, penniless and friendless.

In a city hot-bed, Margaret Mason grew up daintily. She had been taught the fine arts of dancing, flower-painting, and the like, could play a few pieces on the piano with passable skill, and had some little knowledge of the French language. From the time she was seventeen, she went into company. For the most part, her days passed idly, or in the next thing to idleness, novel-reading; while her evenings lapsed pleasantly away in making visits or receiving visitors, with now and then the more exciting diversity of the play, opera, concert, ball, or party. The twin ideas of use and duty came not to distinct perception in her brain; she lived to no purpose but to enjoy.

Was she of wealthy parentage? No! Had she large expectations in the future? Nothing of the kind! Margaret Mason was an orphan, and dependent on a kind but not wise relative, who brought her up as too many girls are brought up in our large cities. He gave her a showy, superficial education, dressed her as well as his means would allow, and put her in the way of getting a start in the world by marriage. Young men only just a little better fitted to enter upon the stern, hard work of life are generally won by the small attractions of just such girls as Margaret Mason. In the present case, a clerk whose moderate salary of six hundred a year had scarcely met his own wants was the one found captive in the gossamer web of our young enchantress. His name was Albert Leslie.

They were married, and with a small flourish of trumpets. There were presents, party-givings, and wordy congratulations, and then our young adventurers on the sea of matrimony were left to steer their own course in life and enjoy its sunny days, or do battle amid its storms.

Margaret went forth from the home of her relative, where she had been tenderly cared for

since the days of childhood, went forth with her young husband, never again to return. Death soon after entered that home, removing its founder and stay, and its members were scattered like shrunk leaves by the winds of autumn.

We will not write of the young bride's first sombre experiences. They came, as they come to all who trust life's precious freight in frail vessels and upon unknown seas. At the end of three years, her husband, who had proved unfortunate in a business venture, resolved to go west. Margaret, now the weak, exhausted, nervous young mother of two children, had scarcely energy enough left for objection, could she have fully comprehended all that was involved in such a movement; and so the step was taken. Their destination was Chicago, where Leslie was promised a clerkship in a forwarding house.

In this new world, the young wife and mother was lost. A few articles of furniture brought from the east, enlarged by some additions made at the point of their destination, enabled them to commence housekeeping in a small tenement far away in the suburbs, at a rent that would consume nearly half of Mr. Leslie's salary. The house was guiltless of modern conveniences, and the almost helpless young wife soon found that the new world into which she had intruded was quite as guileless of other aids to comfortable housekeeping. And now, with Mrs. Leslie, life's battle commenced in earnest. Love for her husband and children made strong a sense of duty; and, weak and unskilled as she was, she accomplished wonders in the way of creating home comforts out of the slender materials that lay in such unpromising shapes around her. Not half of her time was she able to retain a servant; and so, in the intervals, her small, delicate hands came in rough contact with tea-kettle and washing-board. If the duty was hard, wearisome, and exhausting, the frail young woman did not shrink away from it, nor even sit down and fold her hands to weep for a season. Love was very strong in her heart, and, for the sake of her beloved ones, she held not back; and so the little household never lost, in her husband's eye, its look of order or air of comfort. And,

if Margaret's face wore often an aspect of weariness, or was pale and languid, it showed nothing of peevishness or discontent. The strange eyes that caught an occasional glimpse of the pale little woman moving about her house or gliding along on her way to market or the store, guessed nothing adequate as to her daily trials, nor the amount of heroism it required to meet them.

A year after removing to Chicago, another child was born, making the number of human blossoms three. It was just six months from this time when Mr. Leslie sickened and died, leaving, as we said in the beginning, a young, frail, inexperienced woman, and three little ones, penniless and friendless. Almost literally was this true, for the salary of Mr. Leslie had proved barely sufficient to meet their daily wants. He died leaving his family nothing but their clothes and the scant furniture the house contained.

A little while, the stricken wife lay stunned and prostrate; the dead cannot wait, and so all the solemn ceremonials went on, even to the burial. A few sympathizing neighbors offered words of comfort that came with no meaning to the mourner's ears, and then one after another retired, and the bereaved woman was left alone with her orphaned little ones. Bewilderment succeeded. The very stay and support of their lives had been suddenly removed, and what now remained for them but to lie down and perish by the way? The blackness of darkness gathered over the mind of Mrs. Leslie. She looked upwards, there was no light; she strained her eyes into the surrounding gloom, but could trace no path into which her feet might venture.

From this state the sharp spur of inevitable necessity quickened her half stupefied mind into intense activity. Just one week from the day on which her husband died, Mrs. Leslie had a visit from the owner of the house in which she lived. The rent of this house was three hundred dollars a year, and, as the landlord had no outside security for its payment, he thought it prudent to look somewhat closely into the widow's condition and prospects. He was a coarse, straightforward man, who loved money, and knew both how to gain and how to take care of it; but was not, for all that, heartless. After speaking to Mrs. Leslie of her late bereavement in as appropriate terms as he knew how to use, he put the abrupt question:—

"What are your prospects, madam?"

"Prospects? How? What?" She did not clearly understand him.

"Business is business, madam," said the landlord, "and I am a plain, straightforward man. What I wish to know is, whether you are in circumstances to pay the rent of this house; it is, as you know, three hundred dollars a year."

Mrs. Leslie's face grew pale instantly, and she gasped once or twice for breath.

"I have not come to trouble you, ma'am," said the landlord, whose rough heart was touched by the image of distress before him, "but to speak of things as they are, and thus, maybe, save you from some trouble in the future. Try to compose yourself, and look the present right in the face. The rent of this house is three hundred dollars; if you are able to pay it, and wish to remain where you are, I have not a word of objection to make. How is it, Mrs. Leslie?"

"God help me!" ejaculated the miserable woman, bursting into tears. "I am penniless and friendless!"

The landlord waited until the poor widow grew calm, then he said: "I will not press this matter upon you to-day. Think over your situation and prospects, and to-morrow your mind will be clearer. I will call in again, and then we can arrange about your removal."

The landlord arose, and was passing towards the door, when Mrs. Leslie aroused herself with a strong effort, and said: "Oh, stay, sir, stay! No good can come of waiting until to-morrow. Speak out what is in your mind; I can bear to hear it."

The landlord turned and resumed his seat.

"Of course, sir, I am not able to pay the rent of this house, for I have no income. But where can I go? what can I do?"

"If you can't afford to pay the rent, of course I can't afford to let you live in my house. I would soon go to the dogs, at that rate."

Something of the roughness of the man's nature was apparent in his manner. It was as well, perhaps, for it acted as a spur to rouse the young widow's feelings, and thus give her thoughts their needed activity. "I have no wish to remain here, sir," she replied, with forced calmness and some dignity of manner. "I would sooner die with my children than live on charity. Give me a few days to cast around, and I will then move away, and restore your property into your hands. How much rent is now due?"

"A month's rent is all the claim I have, but that I will cheerfully waive under the circumstances; and beyond this, ma'am, if you want my aid or advice in anything, they will be

cheerfully given. You have more furniture here than you will need, in shrinking into a smaller compass with your children. Sell what you can spare; it will bring a good price, and thus secure a little to subsist upon until you can get into the way of earning something. What can you do?" The straightforward landlord's mind went right to first principles—to the "What can you do?" as the only hopeful basis of living in the world.

Mrs. Leslie was silent. What could she do? Ah, that was indeed the great question. Her music was forgotten; she had not been in the way of practising since her marriage. Her French had been a mere superficial ornament; she could not teach French. Painting and drawing were a part of her routine at school; but what she had learned of these was of no practical use to her now. She was a trifle skilled in fine needle-work and embroidery; plain sewing she had learned since she became a mother. Her thoughts passed all these resources in hurried review, but there was no promise in them.

"What can you do?" The landlord repeated his question.

"I can trust in God," said the desponding widow, with as much firmness of voice as she could throw into the words.

"A poor dependence without effort, let me tell you. God helps those who help themselves."

"And those who are willing to help themselves, also."

"It is about the same thing," said the landlord.

"I am willing to help myself," spoke out Mrs. Leslie, with firmness, "and I will trust God for the means of doing it."

"Now you are getting into the right way; hold on in this direction, and you need not fear nor be faint-hearted. I never saw a woman yet who, if true love gave energy to her purposes, could not keep her little ones around her; and you, my friend, young and frail, and ignorant of the world as you seem, will, I am certain, be no exception."

"I thank you, sir, for words of hope and encouragement, and I also accept gratefully your kind offer of aid and advice in this, my great extremity. I see nothing clear before me—no way opening for my feet; all is darkness and uncertainty. But I will look up, striving for patience and hope, and keep my hands ready for the first work that offers."

"That's it," said the landlord, cheerfully. "And now your first work is, to decide what

articles of furniture you will keep and what you will sell. Reserve enough to furnish two or three small rooms, and turn the rest into money. Don't brood over your trouble; don't look ahead with doubt; but do, just now, what reason tells you it is best to do. This is my doctrine, and I have found it a good one."

There came into the face of Mrs. Leslie a more hopeful aspect; all of its lines grew firmer, until the expression rose into self-reliance. "I will make the selection to-day," she said.

"Very well. Shall I call to-morrow, with an auctioneer, and write out an inventory of all you wish to dispose of?"

This was coming still closer to the hard reality of things, and her sensitive spirit shrank back and shuddered. An auction! She had not thought of this broad exposure of herself to the world.

"Would not a private sale be as well?" suggested Mrs. Leslie, in a faltering voice.

"No," replied the landlord; "you might sell a few articles in this way, after hunting about and going through five times the trouble of a vendue. The best thing, by all odds, is a public sale; it is quickest done, and will put more money into your pocket, and you need all you can get."

"Do, sir, as you think best." Mrs. Leslie could not keep back the sadness from her voice. "I will make my selection by to-morrow." And she set about this at once, resolutely endeavoring to rise above the weakness and depression that bore her down and almost paralyzed her energies. The simple effort to do what it seemed right to do, to walk forward in the small reach of open road that lost itself in a wall of impenetrable darkness, gave new activity to the mind, and strengthened its power to see. Thought went beyond the sale and removal, and busied itself with trying to see what might then be done. A reasonable calculation was made as to the value of the different articles of furniture set apart to be sold, and she found that the sum of all was over two hundred and fifty dollars. Then she had a gold watch, various articles of jewelry, and some costly laces; they could also be turned into money, if needed. Her state of mind grew more hopeful, as she looked at this real basis of living. She was not wholly destitute; here was enough to subsist upon for a few months, at least. An emotion of thankfulness stirred in her heart; she lifted her thoughts upward, and prayed that strength equal to her work might be given.

When the landlord called, on the following

day, according to promise, with an auctioneer, he found that Mrs. Leslie had completed her selection of articles to be sold. The inventory was soon made, and a time appointed for the sale; this time was a week in advance, in order to give opportunity for procuring and removing to a new home. After the auctioneer retired, the landlord said, in his straightforward way—

"You have been thinking, of course, as to what you will do after going from here?"

"I have."

"Well, has your mind reached any fair conclusion?"

"No, sir." There was an effort to speak firmly, but a tremor in the young widow's voice betrayed the doubt and fear in her heart. "As yet, all looks dark. I am a stranger here, and friendless; I am young, inexperienced, and timid, and with but small knowledge of the ways of the world. I have thought and thought until my brain seemed on fire. Oh, sir, my heart trembles and shrinks back; the trial is too great, the burden too heavy."

"It is the brave heart that conquers," said the landlord. "Never counsel with Fear; he is a bad adviser. Hope and Courage are our best friends. Let me repeat the question I put to you yesterday—What can you do?"

Mrs. Leslie was silent.

"You can sew, of course; all women know how to use the needle."

"Yes." Faintly. How little hope is there in the needle for a mother and three children!

"But that will not do as a dependence; the confinement would soon kill a weak little body like you. What do you know? Can you teach a school?"

Teach a school! Margaret Leslie teach a school! The young widow looked at her questioner in a kind of bewildered surprise.

"Of course you can," said the landlord, replying to his own query. His idea touching the qualifications of a teacher did not compass a very wide range of acquirements. "You know how to read and to write, to do sums in addition, subtraction, and multiplication? Very well. Little children know less, and, if you can teach them these things, you are fit to set up a school. It strikes me that the best thing for you to do is to begin one for small children. No doubt I can get you some scholars. What do you say?"

"Thanks, from my heart, for your kind interest!" replied Mrs. Leslie, with tear-brimming eye. "That is all I can say now. But I will think over, carefully, what you have sug-

gested. I must do something; but when I do begin I wish to begin right, so as to waste no time."

"Spoken to the purpose!" said the landlord, encouragingly, "spoken right to the purpose. One thing at a time, of course, so far as doing is concerned. And the first thing to be done is selling off superfluous furniture. But, while doing to-day's work, it is always best to be planning a little about to-morrow's work. That is my way."

Teaching a school! At the first presentation of this idea to Mrs. Leslie's mind, it looked preposterous. "I need, rather, to go to school myself," she said, as, in musing upon the subject, after the landlord departed, she tried to review her qualifications. But when she groped about in the dark for some other way to get bread for her children, not even the faintest glimmer of light appeared. As to needle-work, she could never stand that in the world. It always gave her a pain in her side to sit sewing for any considerable time. She was not strong enough to take in washing and ironing. And so, half despairingly, her mind came back to school-teaching. Then began to grow distinct in her mind a new home, circumscribed to three small apartments—a kitchen, a bedroom, and a school-room. She saw herself in the midst of a dozen or more little boys and girls, striving, in a feeble way, to give them instruction. She loved children; and, as this picture grew more distinct, and she saw bright little faces looking up into hers, a feeling of pleasure swelled in her heart.

"Ah!" she sighed, "if I were only fitted for this service—if my education had been more thorough!"

And then she wept, as a depressing sense of her ignorance weighed down her sad heart. Still the image of that little school-room and those bright-faced children kept rising in her thought; and the more she looked at it, the pleasanter it seemed. Then she began to recall the earlier days of her childhood, the school-days so well remembered by all, and dwelt on every minute particular. She was, for a time, a little girl, conning her first lessons; she saw her teacher, observed her manner of proceeding, and progressed with her from the first lessons in A B C on towards the more advanced period when writing lessons came, and the slate succeeded to the well-worn spelling-book. A little light began to dawn. The A B C, the spelling, the reading and writing lessons, these she might teach. And as to what was beyond, could she not herself become a learner,

and furnish herself with the needed skill as her pupils advanced?

"But what shall I do with Katy and the baby?" How like the creation of a dream did the almost pleasant image of a school-room fade from her mind at this question! Katy was two years old, and the baby six months. What could the mother do with them in school hours? Edward was in his fourth year—he could come in with other children; but, during the three morning and three afternoon hours, what would become of Katy and the baby?

"It won't do, it won't do!" And the poor little woman shook her head sadly. "I cannot undertake a school."

And so she was afloat in her plans again. Nearly all of the night that followed did she lie awake, searching about in her troubled thoughts for the ways and means of getting bread for her little ones. But no other suggestion offered, and, at last, she came back to the point from which she started—the little imaginary school-room. Then a quiet, as if a long and weary journey were over, settled upon her mind, and she fell asleep.

The sale day came. It was one of painful trial to Mrs. Leslie, who, with a portion of her reserved furniture, remained shut up in one of the chambers, while the unsympathizing crowd tramped from room to room, and the auctioneer's voice rolled, and rattled, and crashed down at intervals, through the apartments a little while before kept sacred to domestic quiet. Who can blame her, if she wept throughout the trying scene, for now she was feeling the first rude shock of that world forth into which she was about going with her children, alone, friendless, and almost destitute? For her to go forth bravely into this world, unfurnished as she was, and enter upon the battle of life, required more heroism than Napoleon displayed in moving to the field of Waterloo. He had his great army and the prestige of a hundred victories for inspiration; she had—what? Not a single victorious antecedent to flush her heart with the hope of conquest. No, she must go forward, though her enemies seemed an army of giants; and strike with her feeble hands, if she fell bleeding and death-stricken at the first shock. Was not this heroism? Ay, and of the noblest kind; for it was born, not of ambition, but of love. No jewelled crown sparkled in her eyes as she looked upward to heights of human glory; she saw not Fame lifting his trumpet to sound her triumphs so loud that coming ages should hear them; but, in feebleness and in darkness, moved onward

because duty was to be done, baring her defenceless bosom to the swift-winged and sharp piercing arrows. If this were not heroism, then the word is a mockery.

All was at last over. The sale had ended, and the eager purchasers had removed the property which, in this brief time, had changed owners. There was a tap at her door, and Mrs. Leslie opened it to the auctioneer and his attendant, who, with the landlord, were all that remained of the crowd which had filled the house. Her pale cheeks and wet eyes, as she stood with her baby in her arms, and two little ones timidly clinging to her garments, touched the hearts of the three men, unused, as they were, to softer moods.

"And so it is over?" she said, speaking with forced calmness. How rapidly was she schooling herself into self-control and endurance!

"Yes, it is over, madam," replied the landlord, "and well over. The sale is better than we anticipated. You will have nearly four hundred dollars."

"Thank God!" fell from the widow's lips. The sum was so much more than she had hoped to realize. It was speedily paid over to her. As the last coin was placed in her hands, the landlord said:—

"Our friend here"—glancing at the auctioneer—"has told me of a house down in the city, occupied by a clever old couple, who have more room than they want, and who have been talking for some time about letting two or three apartments. The location is just the one for a school. They own the house, and so there could be no trouble as to underletting, and no fear of being left with a whole house on your hands. You see, madam, that I look at things all round. Shall I call upon them, and see how they feel about it?"

There seemed no other way for Mrs. Leslie. All things pointed to a school, miserably furnished as she was for such a work, and even more unfavorably circumstanced as to things external, having a babe at her breast, and two little children besides, themselves almost babes. What time had she to give to the unyielding duties of a school-teacher? "If you please," she answered, meekly.

"It is always best to strike while the iron is hot," said the landlord. "I will see these people at once."

An hour passed.

"It's all settled." The kind-hearted man spoke cheerily, as he came in. "They hung fire a little, but, when I promised a year's rent in advance, or to become myself responsible for

a year, they had nothing more to say against it. You are to have the front room in the second story for a school, the room above for a bed-room, and the use of the kitchen. The rent will be one hundred dollars. What do you say to that?"

"Only, may God bless the widow's friend!" answered Mrs. Leslie, in a choking voice.

"I have ordered a wagon," said the landlord. "Hark! it is coming up now. They are clearing out the rooms, and you are to go into them at once. Never mind about house-cleaning." He saw what was in her mind. "That was all done a month ago, and you'll find everything in print. There's no use in your staying here over another night."

Mrs. Leslie saw differently from that, however, and gave such good reasons for delaying the removal until the next morning, that the landlord had to give a reluctant acquiescence. In doing so, however, he had his say about women's queer ideas, and the impossibility of doing anything with them if they once get a notion fairly into their heads.

On the following day, Mrs. Leslie turned with a heavy heart from the now rifled and desolate home where a husband's love had sheltered and guarded her, and went out into the world to struggle alone, in feebleness and ignorance. It was of little use that she said to her trembling and failing heart, "Oh, heart, be still, and trust in God; He is a father to the fatherless, and husband to the widow." Weak nature would have, for a time, its way. But who has not found, in this life of trial and vicissitude, sustaining power in the simple doing of what the hands find to do? In the very effort to remove or pass by some great mountain that has lifted itself across our path, the heart gains strength and confidence; fear dies in the face of courageous effort, and, ere the troubled mind takes cognizance of its changing state, it is blessed with tranquil confidence. So it was with weak, doubting, fearful Mrs. Leslie. The current of events bore her steadily onward, and brought, with each passing hour, its own appropriate work, down to which she bent herself, and, with busy hands, strove for its right performance. If she looked even a day or a week ahead, she grew faint and trembled, but in doing her present task there came always a measure of peace.

The new home was soon in order, for it did not take long to adjust the small remnant of worldly goods that remained in the widow's possession. Then her thoughts went forward again, in troubled strife with the future. How

was she to keep a school, that only resource which had yet presented itself? Baby seemed more fretful and dependent than ever, and, since their change of residence, the two other children hardly left her side for a moment.

On the day after Mrs. Leslie's removal, her former landlord, whose interest in her could not die out suddenly—indeed, he had pledged himself to aid her in getting up a school, and he was not the man to let his words fall fruitless on the air—called in to see how matters stood and to offer a little further advice. Looking with a careful eye, as was his habit, to such things as touched his own interest, his first suggestion was, that the year's rent be paid in advance, seeing that the means to do so was in hand. "Then," said he, "your mind will be easy as to a home, for that will be secured for a year." He did not say that this pleasant arrangement would take away all obligation from him, in case there should be a failure to pay the rent. But no matter; he was not perfect, and let him have praise for acting kindly up to his best ability, for he had been, so far, a true friend to the almost helpless widow.

To this suggestion Mrs. Leslie offered no demurrer; it was in accordance with her own views.

"And now," said the other, when this point was settled, rubbing his hands together, and looking particularly pleased, "I've been working for you in a new direction. There's an excellent family living in one of my houses, a man and his wife, who have no children of their own. I've been talking to them about you, and persuading them to take one of your children and adopt it as their own."

An instant pallor came over the widow's face, and she drew her arm with almost a vice-like clasp around little Katy, who was leaning against her.

"The lady is coming here to see you about it to-morrow. I think she will prefer the little girl."

For a few moments Mrs. Leslie struggled with her feelings. Already she was gaining self-control in these new and fearful trials. Then she said, in a low, husky voice, from which the tremor could not be wholly kept back, "You are very kind, sir, but I cannot part with my children."

"But reflect, madam," urged the man; "think of your condition and of the child's good. You will be wholly relieved from the burden of her support, and she will pass, by adoption, into one of the best homes in our city. The family is rich, and she will grow up

as an only child. I know that it must be a trial for any mother; but then we must consult the good of our children, as well as our own feelings."

Mrs. Leslie bent down her head until her face lay hidden among the soft curls that clustered around the temples, brow, and neck of her darling Katy. She was not debating the proposition, but opening her heart deeper, that the child might get a more secure place there.

"What say you?" The landlord pressed hard the question.

"That I will die with my children, but not part with them."

The landlord was disappointed and offended. Losing patience, he said, roughly, "Very well, madam, you can paddle your own canoe, for all I care." And he went stalking from the house, and never came near her again.

Night seemed to have fallen suddenly, after a dark and tearful day. The only friend upon whom Mrs. Leslie had leaned, with any hope of being sustained in her efforts, had now turned from her in anger; and she felt like one who, in passing over some fearful chasm, was conscious that the slender plank was yielding beneath her tread. Mrs. Wayland, the woman into whose house she had removed, came up to her room about half an hour after the landlord went away; the unusual stillness there had attracted her notice. She tapped at the door lightly, but, as no response came from within, she pushed it open, and entered. She found Mrs. Leslie sitting with Katy in her arms, and her face bent down and hidden. The baby lay asleep in its cradle, while Edward sat playing with some paper soldiers on the floor. The only one who noticed her entrance was the little boy, who looked up to her with a pleased smile.

"Mrs. Leslie!" But there was no movement of the bowed figure. "Mrs. Leslie!" She spoke now in a louder tone, at the same time laying her hand upon Mrs. Leslie's shoulder.

With a start, Mrs. Leslie raised her head, and looked at Mrs. Wayland in a bewildered manner.

"Are you sick?" asked the latter, in a kind voice. There was something in the voice that went stealing down into the sufferer's heart.

"Not sick, but in despair," she replied, mournfully.

"There is a bright side to every cloud," said Mrs. Wayland.

"Not to the cloud that has fallen over me," was the sadly-spoken answer. Katy, who was lying upon her lap, now raised herself up; as she did so, her mother drew her tightly to her

bosom, and said, in a half wild way, "Give up my darling to a stranger! Never! never! I will die with and for my children, but never give them up."

"No one wishes to take away your children," said Mrs. Wayland, who began to think that the poor woman's mind was disordered.

"Yes, they do; they want my Katy," was replied.

"Who wants her?"

"A lady is coming to-morrow."

"What lady?"

"I don't know her name, but Mr. Lawson has been talking to her; and, because I told him that I would die with my children rather than part with them, he went off in anger, saying that I might get along as best I could."

"Mr. Lawson is well enough in his way, but he isn't all the world by a great deal," said the old lady, showing a trifle of womanly indignation. "It's all very nice for a man to talk to a mother about giving up her children, as if they were sheep or cattle, but he knows nothing about it; so, brighten up, my little woman, and don't take it to heart. Things will come out right; they always do. That's my experience, and I've had some pretty hard rubs in getting through the world. If I understand, you have enough ahead to keep you for the next six months; so, you see, there's plenty of space to turn around in. Scholars will come in, if only one at a time. You'll get a school, and no thanks to Mr. Lawson."

Mrs. Leslie, without answering, rose and went to a drawer, from which she took a package of money. "Let me do one thing," she said, "and that is, secure this house for a year. Here are a hundred dollars, the amount of rent. It is set apart for this purpose, and will be safest in your hands."

Mrs. Wayland received the money, simply saying, as she did so, "Let it be as you wish." She then added, in a tone of encouragement: "I have something for you on the brighter side; two scholars, to begin with." A light glanced over Mrs. Leslie's face. "But let me explain myself," said Mrs. Wayland, taking a chair; she had, until now, been standing. "There is one thing that I have seen from the beginning; you can't teach a school unless there is somebody to take care of your children, the two youngest, especially. Now, I think I can manage this for you. The scholars I spoke of are two little orphan nieces; if you will teach them, I will take care of Katy and the baby during school hours. How does this strike you?"

"Oh, ma'am," replied Mrs. Leslie, grasping the hand of Mrs. Wayland, "nothing could suit me better."

"Very well, that may be regarded as settled, and so much towards a school. Beginning with these two little girls, you can feel your way, as it were, brush up, and get your hand in, by the time other scholars come along."

How soon after the shadows fell did the sunlight drive them away! It was but the going down of one day in darkness, that another day of brighter aspect might succeed.

In a week, Mrs. Leslie was ready to open her school. She took that time to acquaint herself as much as possible with books of instruction and modes of teaching, for, being in earnest, and seeing only this resource before her, she gave up her thought to her work, and resolved to do it well—that is, up to the full measure of her ability. It so happened that kind Mrs. Wayland had an acquaintance, a young woman recently from New England, who, before her marriage, was a teacher. When she was introduced to Mrs. Leslie, and made acquainted with her designs, she entered into them with a lively interest; in fact, undertook to give the teacher not only the first lessons in her art, but to plan for her a course of study in the right direction. Thus came another strengthening assurance to the heart of Mrs. Leslie that, when we strive to do our duty, obstructions remove themselves out of our way. We have but to lift our feet and plant them firmly in advance, to find the ground sure beneath our tread.

Mrs. Leslie always loved children. When a young girl, she would gather them around her, and tell them stories by the hour; and children were always attracted to her.

"I am afraid these two little girls will give you trouble," said Mrs. Wayland, on the day the school was opened. "They have been sadly neglected since their mother's death."

"I will make them love me," was the quiet answer.

And it was so. The young teacher did not begin by adopting a stately formality; she held in her mind no school pattern for imitation. She made no system of rules for strict observance; but, desiring to do her duty by her pupils, she sought, through her own instincts, the way to their hearts; and she found the way. How easy the task was that seemed, as she looked at it from the dim distance, impossible to perform! She was able to look right into the minds of her pupils, to take hold, as it were, of their thoughts, and draw them towards those facts and formulas which are first

to be stored in the memory, and then raised up into the region of intelligence; and in doing this, in her own way, she kept them always interested, and made their school-hours pleasant, instead of irksome.

At the end of ten days, two more scholars were added. The friend of Mrs. Wayland, referred to as having been a teacher, had looked on, with no common interest, to see how the experiment of Mrs. Leslie would succeed. A week's observation satisfied her; and on her recommendation this addition was made to the school.

From that time the future of Mrs. Leslie was settled. Her little flock steadily increased, until, before six months had expired, the number reached twenty. It was plain, however, both to herself and the few kind friends who had learned to take an interest in her, that her duties were too severe. She was a frail, slender woman, with a narrow chest and rather low vitality. The earnestness with which she was bending every power of body and mind to this double work of teaching and self-instruction told severely upon her nervous system, and made signs of warning on her paling cheeks and hollow eyes. But there was no turning back to find a new path; this was the only one that had opened to her feet, and, for the sake of her beloved ones, she must go forward, though the sharp stones cut her at every footfall.

A year later found her with a flourishing school, but in a new location. The room at Mrs. Wayland's proving too small, she had taken an entire house, with ampler accommodations. Here she went on, in her life-battle, from conquering unto conquest. The reputation of her school had spread so widely that she was solicited to take more advanced pupils. She had neither the time nor the ability to teach these, and so had to add to her establishment two or three competent instructors. Yet still, as her work increased, did her strength of body—not of will—decline. The aching head and depressed nervous system, the pains that often robbed her of sleep, had no power to turn her aside from her chosen path. For her children she was ready to die, if that must be; to accept the crown of martyrdom, but not to swerve from duty.

Two, three, four, five years came and went, yet the devoted little woman was still at her post. The school was large, and the demand on all her faculties constant and imperative.

"You will kill yourself," said one.

"You will have to give up your school," said another.

"No one has a right to commit suicide," suggested a third.

Mrs. Leslie heard all this, looked at her helpless children, considered them, and kept on. The question of stopping was not even debated.

And still, as the years went by, the pale, thin face of Mrs. Leslie was seen daily in her school, which, under her excellent management, held its own, though institutions of greater scope and higher pretensions were growing up around her. At last, Edward, her oldest son, reached his majority, and entered the world as a pure-minded, earnest, honest man. At seventeen, she had placed him in a store, where, by industry and intelligence, he gained his employer's confidence, and now he was fairly launched on the sea of life, well furnished for the voyage. Katy had been educated as a teacher, and brought into the school; but a man worthy to claim her hand wanted her for another position, and so removed her to a new home. Willie, who was studying medicine, alone remained to lean upon her failing arm. How earnestly and tenderly did Edward and Katy beseech their mother to give up, and spare her life! But her duty, as she saw it, was not yet done; and so she kept on a few years longer; then the end came, and she rested from her labor.

Willie, her youngest born, and—if her true mother's heart leaned towards one of her children more than another—her idol, had closed his three years' course of study, and received, at Cincinnati, his diploma. The hour for his arrival at home had come, and, with a heart full of love and thankfulness that God had spared her to complete her wish, Mrs. Leslie looked for his appearance. She was conscious of feeling weaker than usual; the ordinary duties of the day had pressed upon her heavily, and many times she had been compelled, through sheer weakness, to lie down, in order to recover her wasting strength.

The night had fallen. Edward was away at the depot to meet Willie on the arrival of the cars, and Katy had come around from her pleasant home to share the family joy. She sat with her mother, and talked of the smiling future which stood, with a quiver full of blessings, beckoning her onward.

"I feel very weak to-night, weaker than usual," said Mrs. Leslie, leaning back in the large easy-chair, with a weary movement.

"Let me bring you a pillow." And Katy ran lightly over to her mother's room and

brought back a pillow, which she placed on the sofa. "Now lie down," she said. "Ah, that is more comfortable." And she kissed the pale brow and thin lips of her heroic mother, tenderly and lovingly.

"The cars are late coming in, to-night. I hope nothing has happened to them." There was a tremor of concern in the voice of Mrs. Leslie.

She had hardly said this when the door was heard to open, and then came manly footsteps, with a springing tread, bravely along the passage. "Thank God!" leaped from the mother's heart, as she rose up, and leaned forward eagerly to get the first sight of her boy, returning home with honor resting upon his brow. Into her outstretched arms he came. Clapping him almost wildly to her heart, she sobbed:—

"My son! my son!"

"Dear, dear mother!" He sent the words to her heart, in no mockery of sound, but in tones of living affection. "Dear mother! I am with you again."

For an unusual time, Mrs. Leslie stood holding her arms around her son, and hiding her face upon his shoulder, then, lifting her head, she murmured, as if answering back to her own thoughts: "Yes, blessed be God! It was His strength, not mine."

The children noticed an unusual pallor in her always pale face.

"Lie down again, dear mother," said Katy, pressing the light form back upon the sofa. "This excitement is too much for you."

There was a smile of peace on the mother's pure face as she looked first at one and then at another of her children.

"God bless you all," she said, with unusual emotion, "and make you, my sons, good and true men, and you, my daughter, a good and true woman. I have lived for this hour; and my reward is great. God bless and keep you!"

The low voice quivered, and tears came out from beneath the closed lids, and shone like diamond drops on the silken lashes.

Shall we go on?

Heroic woman! the great battle of life is over, and thou art crowned with the laurel wreath of victory. In the very flush of triumph, with all thy rich trophies around thee, thy day went down in floods of glory!

On all the blood-stained pages of history, is there written down the story of truer heroism than this?

AUNT TABITHA'S FIRESIDE.

NO. XIX.—A VISIT FROM OLD FRIENDS.

BY EDITH WOODLEY.

"Who on airth is comin' up the lane? Do run to the winder, Paul, and see ef you can find out, while I slip on my best cap. Lizzie, where is it?"

"Which one do you mean, Aunt Tabitha?"

"Why, the one you trimmed with laylock-colored ribbin, last week. That's the one. Now, help me about puttin' it on. Massy on me, if I ain't all of a flutter, for 'tis plain to see that it must be somebody that's purty grand, to ride in a coach with sich a power of goold-leaf put on crinkle-craukle all round the edges. And then there's the two black horses, that look as much alike as two peas, and shine and glisten equal to Major Crensy's best calfskin butes, that he wears grand muster days, arter he has made his boy Zeke rub and polish 'em with Day & Martin's blackin'."

"Why, aunt, that's one of the railroad coaches," said Paul.

"Du tell! Well, I do declare, ef it don't look smart enough for the President that the free and enlightened citizens have placed at the helum of this great country, as young Squire Hitchens said in his Fourth of July oration. I've seen the time when I shouldn't thought it a hardship to walk the matter of half a dozen mile to get sight of sich a grand-lookin' coach as that. The land, how this cap bothers me! I've got it all a one side. Lizzie, do put it straight for me once more, and I'll try to keep it so. There, Paul, the coach has stopped, and the folks in it are gettin' out. Ef you'll jest go and wait on 'em in, I shall be one of the most thankfulest critters that ever breathed the breath of life."

"I'll do it with the greatest pleasure, aunt; so all you've got to do is to get your cap straight."

"Stop, Paul, and I'll go with you. Whether my cap's straight or crooked is all one to me, for ef that ain't brother Dawkins and his wife, that moved up into the Ohio country eight or ten year ago, I'll never guess ag'in."

"You are right, aunt," said Lizzie. "I remember how they looked, for all I was such a little girl when they moved away."

"Why, Darcus Dawkins, how du you du?"

I was thinkin', no longer ago than yesterday, that 'twas more'n like as not I should never set eyes on you ag'in as long as I lived, nor brother Jacob nyther. Well, you both look as nateral as life—haven't altered a single artom, as I can see. Come, Jacob, take off your woosted comforter; it's a beauty. Did Darcus knit it for ye?"

"Yes. I told her there was no need of my havin' one—thought 'twas no use for me to bundle up in that way; but she wouldn't hear a word to me, and so, arter she'd knit it, I thought 'twas as well to wear it."

"Sartain it was; and now take off yer great coat, while I help Darcus off with her hood and cloak, and the rest of her things. Paul, give the fire a stir, and throw on a few more sticks of that dry maple, for I should think yer uncle and aunt would be chilled through, ridin' this cold day. Come, Darcus, and set in this 'ere rockin'-cheer, and, Paul, hand yer uncle the mate to it. Now, Darcus, the fust thing you do must be to tell Lizzie and me how yer darter Nabby is."

"Oh, she's the same old sixpence, as the sayin' is, that she al'ays was."

"Smart to work as ever, I s'pose."

"I guess you'd think so, ef you could see the work she turns off in a day. She could al'ays do as much as any two hired gals I could get, when she lived at home; and now she's got a family of her own, she don't let any grass grow under her feet, I can tell ye."

"Du tell ef Nabby is married?"

"Yes, indeed. Didn't you never hear of it?"

"No, never heard a single lisp about it. How long is it sence she was married?"

"Well, the knot was tied Thanksgiving Day, but whether 'tis five or six year ago I can't for the life of me remember. Which is it, Jacob?"

"Well, I should say 'twas five year and six months sence."

"What do you know by?"

"The age of my best pair of team horses, to be sure."

"La, yes, I might 'ave thought."

"Whom did my cousin marry?" inquired Lizzie.

"His name is Smalley. You remember old Deacon Smalley, Tabitha, that used to live next neighbor to Daniel Pilsbury, don't you?"

"Yes, I guess I do. He was a purty good kind of a man, and well to do in the world."

"Well, Nabby's husband is Deacon Smalley's oldest son."

"Du tell!"

"'Tis sartain so, and his name is David. The Deacon had three more boys, you know—John, Sam, and Job—and they've turned out well, all but Job, and he's a well-meanin' soul as ever wore shoe-leather, but he's turrible shiftless."

"And David—has he got together a purty good interest?"

"I guess he has. There ain't many richer men in Ohio than David Smalley is."

"And what kind of a weddin' had you?"

"Fust rate. Everybody fur and near was invited, and they wa'n't very back'ard in acceptin' the invitation. They all stayed to supper, and ef there'd ben twice as many, there wouldn't 'ave been any lack in the where-with-all to treat 'em with. You know what a good pervider Jacob al'ays was, and he's jest as free-hearted now as he used to be. There were turkeys and chickens roast and b'iled, pies, puddin's, and tarts, and all kinds of persarves, to say nothin' of the great loaves of riz bread, the soda-biscuit, and sweet cake of all kind, from the best of pound-cake down to merlasses gingerbread; and then, to crown the whole, there were two great loaves of weddin'-cake. Sary Bright called it bridle-cake, but what it had to do with bridles is more'n I can tell, but I wouldn't show my ignorance by askin'. As I was sayin', there was two great loaves of weddin'-cake, jest as good and rich as they could be made, and all frosted over, so that they looked as white as snow-drifts; and then, peerched right on top of each of 'em, was two birds; I thought then, and I think so still, that they looked like hawks, but Sary Bright said they were meant for doves."

"Well, I should liked to have ben there, that's sartain. What was Nabby dressed in—white satting?"

"No. That's what she thought of havin' at first, but the mantlemaker said there was a kind of French stuff called tarlantane, that was a great deal more fash'nable and stylish than white satting, so she concluded to have hers made of it."

"And how was David dressed?"

"All in superfine broadcloth, from top to toe. There wasn't an inch of hum'spun in his whole

suit, not even the linin' of his waistcoat; and in that I thought he was a leetle mite extravagant, for I had a piece of bleached linning in the house—every thread of it was spun and wove by my own hands—that would 'ave done to line his waistcoat and coat-sleeves too."

"They're talkin' about Nabby's husband," said Mr. Dawkins to Paul, who caught a few words of what they were saying, "which makes me think of Deacon Smalley, his father, and a leetle somethin' that happened when I was a youngster about your age."

"What was it?" said Paul. "I should like to know."

"Well, I guess I'll let your Aunt Tabitha tell you. She was there, as I very well remember, and can recollect the partic'lars enough sight better'n I can."

"What's that that you think I can remember so much better'n you?" asked Aunt Tabitha.

"I mean that little affair that happened over twenty year ago, the day the schulemaster delivered an address on edication."

"An address on edication, did you say?"

"Yes, don't you remember?"

"What was the schule-master's name?"

"Jeemes Crane. His father sent him to college, and he'd jest graduated, so the committee hired him to keep our schule."

"I remember Jeemes," said Mrs. Dawkins.

"When he fust came out of college, he thought he was the biggest man in the place, but, arter a while, he found out his mistake."

"So do I remember him," said Aunt Tabitha.

"Jacob means the time when Deacon Smalley's dog figured so largely, I s'pose."

"Yes," replied Mr. Dawkins, "that's the very time. The address was delivered in the new meetin'-us."

"I remember all about it, now," said Aunt Tabitha. "Well, to begin at the beginning, I may as well mention that, so far back as that, the parish was kind of poor, and, arter gettin' the clapboards, and shingles, and nails, and glass, there wasn't anything left to get the wherewithal to put the pews into the meetin'-us, nor to build the singer-seats with, so the congregation was obleeged to put up with seats made of a few boards propped up on blocks of wood, the fust year. We thought we did purty well to get a pulpit fixed out in decent style; we had to look out desput sharp, and fly round as brisk as bumble-bees to do it, women-folks and all. I can remember as well as ef 'twas no longer ago than yesterday, that Patty Pilsbury and I went to Sam Wallinford's store, over to Oak Village—Sam's was all the store

there was within a dozen mile of here then—and bartered away two whole churnin's of butter, seven dozen of eggs, ten quarts of blueberries, and a bushel of wheat for enough green maroon to make a curting for the pulpit winder and the cushion to lay the Bible and psalm-book on.

"Well, Deacon Smalley and his wife, gin'rally speakin', used to go to meetin' in their shay, for they lived so fur off that they couldn't go home at noon if they walked. Now it so happened that one of their neighbors wanted to go a journey, and, as he didn't own any shay, and wanted his darter to go with him, he went and asked the Deacon to lend him his. He forgot all about its bein' the day that Jeemes was to deliver his address, and I don't s'pose but what he would have lent it ef he hadn't, for the Deacon, and his wife, too, were turrible obleegin' sort of folks. Mr. Palmer, the man that borrowed the shay, hadn't got out of sight when they remembered that they should want it that day.

"'Never mind,' said Miss Smalley, 'we can go afoot; that is, ef you think you can help carry the baby.'

"'I guess, ef I try, I can not only help, but carry him all the way.'

"David was the only child they had then, and, as he was only about a year and a half old, Miss Smalley thought 'twas best to carry something for him to eat, so as to keep him quiet. As he lived mostly on milk, she put some in a tin dipper, 'cause she didn't like to carry an airthen thing, for fear 'twould get broke, and crockeryware didn't grow on every bush, them days. When she got to the meetin'-us, she took a seat all by herself, close up to the pulpit, seein' she had a child to take keer on, and, throwin' a cloth over the dipper of milk, she sot it under the seat.

"Now the deacon had a little yaller dog—the dog's name was Watch—that al'ays follered him everywhere he went, on'y to meetin'. He didn't allow him to go there, and the dog knew it; but he was as cunnin' as a fox, and contrived to foller at such a distance as not to be found out, sometimes. Psalm-books and hymn-books were rather sca'ce articles in them days, and, besides the minister and deacon, I don't believe there was a single pairson in the meetin'-us that owned one, except Patty Pilsbury and me; so, in the sca'city of books, arter the minister had read the hymn, the deacon al'ays had to line it for 'em to sing.

"As ill luck would have it, the man Deacon Smalley lent his shay to was the one that al'ays

pitched the tune. 'Twas thought best to begin 'by singin', the same as the services were begun Sabba'day, or 'twouldn't 'ave been any matter. Well, arter the hymn was read, the Deacon give out the two fust lines. I don't remember what the fust line was, but part of the second was, 'And dig for golden ores.' Jeemes Crane piked the hymn out, 'cause, as he said, that diggin' for golden ores might, in a figurey sense, be s'posed to be the same as diggin' for science and all the highest kinds of larnin', and, as the address was to be on edication, 'twould be kind of 'ppropriate.

"You know, Jacob, and so does Darcus, that Deacon Smalley wasn't the best reader in the world, and, as to that, it wasn't to be wondered at, for he never had any great chance to get larnin' of any kind. So, gin'rally, he used to find out beforehand what hymns were goin' to be sung, so that he might have a chance to look 'em over; but that day he didn't find out in season. I could see in a minute that he was kind of puzzled, for he kept turnin' his book so as to have the light strike fair on the page, and drawin' his fingers over his forehead, as if some idee was buried there, and he was tryin' to rake it out. Arter a while, he fetched a long breath, as ef his mind was relieved, and then he cleared his throat and begun. I wish I could remember the fust line, but I find I can't, so there's no use in tryin'. At any rate, instead of readin', 'And dig for golden ores,' he read, 'And dig with golden hoes.'

"Them that didn't have any books thought 'twas all right, I s'pose, but Patty Pilsbury, who sot next to me, give my elbow a jog, and says she, jest loud enough for me to hear: 'I guess Deacon Smalley's mind is runnin' on farmin' instead of edication, this mornin' partic'lar diggin' pertaters.'

"I had hard work to keep my countenance while the Deacon was waitin' for somebody to set the tune, but nobody sounded a note.

"'Isn't there some pairson present,' says he, at last, 'that'll pick out a sootable tune for the occasion, and pitch it?' Not a single soul stirred or moved. You might 'ave s'posed that everybody had turned into so many stone statutes. 'Come, Miss Pilsbury,' said the Deacon, speakin' to Patty, 'can't you strike some-thin'? You know every tune in the singin'-book, besides a good many ranthems, and the others will soon j'ine you, ef you on'y make a beginnin'.'

"I don't know whether Patty would 'ave mustered courage enough to accept his invertation or not, for, jest as he'd done speakin',

there was one of the queerest noises, and, at the same time, kind of doleful like, that ever assailed my ears, as Jeemes Crane said, when he was speakin' about it arterwards. My fust thought was that somebody had undertaken to strike a tune, and gettin' kind of frightened like, had broke out into that turrible, doleful, distressed, and dismal noise, that sounded somewhere between a howl and a whino. Old Miss Keeser, who was naterally narvous, was so skairt that she jumped right up off of her seat, threw her arms up, and screamed right out.

"But we soon found out what it was, for the Deacon's little yaller dog made his appearance, with his head squeezed so hard into the dipper of milk Miss Smalley had put under the seat that he couldn't, for the life of him, get it out ag'in, and so he went the whole length of the aisle, makin' that onairthly noise, and thumpin' the dipper on the floor every step he took.

"You know that Mr. Smalley was rayther young for a deacon, and so he thought that it behooved him to kinder stand on his dignity; so, instead of goin' and liberatin' the dog, as I knew he wanted to, he stood as stiff as a stake, put on a dreadful long face, and looked as grave and as sturn as if he was a judge. At last, he couldn't bear it any longer, and says he: 'Won't some of the youngsters present pull the dipper off of that dog's head, so that we can go forrard with the sarvices of the day?'

"With that, four or five boys that sot near the door sprung up, and one of 'em took Watch and carried him out of the meetin'-'us, and the rest follered arter. They made out to set the poor dog at liberty somehow, I never knowed exactly how. At any rate, ever arterwards he took a great dislike to anything made of tin, partic'larly a tin dipper. Miss Smalley told me that she could never arter that make him eat or drink out of any kind of a tin vessel, and that he was as afeard of pewter or of anything shinin' as he was of tin."

"Did you have to give up singing?" inquired Lizzie.

"No, indeed! Arter we'd got our faces straight and our narves kind of stilled down, Patty and I talked the matter over between ourselves, and concluded that ef there wasn't a pairson in the meetin'-'us that could pitch a psalm-tune, we were, take us by small and large, a set of poor critters; so we beckoned to Ruth Burbank—she had the best voice for counter that I ever heerd. As I was sayin', we beckoned to Ruth, so she come over to where we sot, and we told her if she would sing the

counter to old Stratfield, Patty would sing the air, and I would sing the treble.

"Well, I will," says she.

"Upon this, we all three riz, and begun to sing right off afore our courage had time to cool, and from that day to this I've never hearn any music that sounded so well to me as that did. Patty's voice was as clear as a bell, and as for Ruth's, as it floated up among the oak rafters of the meetin'-'us, I never heard a skylark's, when it flew up from its nest, jest in time to catch the fust streak of mornin' sunshine on its wings, that was half equal to it. It brought two-thirds of the people to their feet afore they knew it, as they arterwards said. We kept on till we sung the four fust lines, so as to give the Deacon time to gather up his scattered idees, and then he went on and lined it reg'larly, so that whoever had a mind to could j'ine; and I don't think there was a single pairson, man, woman, or child, that had any pretensions to a voice for singin', but what struck right in. Somehow, they couldn't seem to help it. As for the Deacon, the haze seemed to be cleared away from his mind, and he read the hymn equal to any minister. Singin' that hymn seemed to take the nonsense all out of us young folks, and for that day we thought no more about diggin' potatoes with goold hoes, nor of the dog with his head in the dipper."

"And what kind of an address on education did Mr. Crane give you?" inquired Paul.

"Oh, 'twas passable," replied Aunt Tabitha.

"One thing is sartin," said Mr. Dawkins, "it didn't lack for long, highflown words. I remember I went to see Darcus that evenin', and so we tried to pick out some of 'em in the dictionary, but, arter all, we wa'n't much the wiser for 't."

"'Twould all done well enough," said Mrs. Dawkins, "ef the highflown words had seemed to come in naterally and in the right place, but they didn't. Towards the windin' up, I remember, there was one sentence in a partic'lar manner that made me think of a great starn' red patch on the back of a black coat."

"Paul, do look at your watch," said Aunt Tabitha, "and see what time of day 'tis."

"Almost four," was his answer.

"Well, I declare, how fast time does run! Why, Darcus, what a workin' body you are! You've kept your fingers flyin' at yer knittin'-work, while I've done nothin' but talk. Well, you, and Jacob, and Paul must do the talkin' now, and Lizzie and I'll go and see about gettin' tea."

MISS SLIMMENS'S BOARDING-HOUSE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE TALLOW FAMILY."

(Continued from page 241.)



CHAPTER VII.

SHE TAKES A LITTLE BOUND-GIRL TO LOVE AND
CHERISH.

Mercy! what a crash! something's gone to smash in that kitchen now. O dear! I've no peace of my life! I've had that bound-girl in the house a week, and it 'pears to me a centurion. Tired as I am, I must trot down and see what's gone, before she has a chance to hide the pieces.

What have you broke now, Caturah? Don't tell me you hain't broke nothing; I heard it as plain as day. Lord-a-mercy! if it isn't that soup-tureen that I paid eighteen shillings for only the other day. The boarders will go without soup now for one while, if it is cheap feeding. And how am I going to get the worth of it out of you, my little baggage? you've no wages to keep back, and you've nothing to detach. Pretty economy it was taking you in place of a good stout hired girl, and doing the best of the work myself for the sake of having some good out of you some time, and you've destroyed more'n your head's worth the first week of your coming. How am I going to get back my eighteen shillings, I say? I'll get it out of your back; yes, Miss, I'll see what virtue there is in whips; and I'll half starve you to make it up. Oh, you needn't begin to whimper. You'll have something to cry for before night,

something that will make you wish you *was* back in the poor-house where you belong.

Go out in the garden and get me a couple of them peach-sprouts, and come in and take off your vandyke. Stop, I won't hear a word! don't try to interrupt me, you ill-mannered child. March, and be sure you get good stout ones, or I'll go myself; go along, this instance!

Humph! rather slimpsy sprouts; but they'll do, I guess. Now, Miss, off with that vandyke. What? where? Oh, Mr. Greyson's dog did it, did he? A likely story! humph! a dog breaking a soup-tureen. What's that? sneaked in, before you knew it, and got his nose in it, and knocked it off the table? Hum! a likely story. But it *pays*, at all events—better'n whipping *you*, much as I ache to do it. If Mr. Greyson's dog broke the tureen, Mr. Greyson'll pay for it, of course. He's a gentleman, and always does what's right about money matters. I shall tell him just how it occurred, and charge it in his week's account. But, mind, I don't believe you, not a word you speak, you naughty, deceitful child! Do you know what an awful thing it is to tell a lie? Did nobody ever read to you the story out of the Bible about Annanias and Sophia? how they were struck dead upon the spot for telling a lie—a terrible, wicked lie. Ain't you afraid the same thing will happen to you for your— Good gracious, Mr. Lit-

ble, how you do do surprise a person! What's brought you down here into the meditaranean portions of my abode? Oh, no, not in the least! you haven't decomposed me at all, and you needn't feel under the necessity of apologizing. Some boarding-houses might not want their boarders to appear unsuspectedly in their kitchens, but I'm not one of that sort. If I have a fault, which the most of us have, more or less, it's in being too superciliously neat. Caturah, look if there's any hot water to spare in the boiler. Yes, Mr. Little, you can have all you like. What was I doing with them peach-sprouts? Oh, you funny man! what do you *suppose* I was doing with them? nothing, as yet. But the cats is awful troublesome about here: they'll filbert the very chickens off the gridiron if they aren't watched; and I've just been telling Caturah to keep these sprouts handy, and the next time she catches 'em at any of their snooping jest to administer a good, smart cagation to them. You didn't know but perhaps, as I'd never had any babies of my own to spank, I was going to try my hand on little Caturah here! He! he! you'll be the death of me yet, with all your jokes, Mr. Little. I trust you don't mean that for a double intender. I'm very particular; I don't make it a practice to joke with my gentlemen boarders; for a young lady in my situation, you know, has to exercise a great deal of circumspection. But you're so overpowering, Mr. Little, I always *have* to smile at you. You're glad to hear it's only the cats. Of course it's the cats, and that dog of Mr. Greyson's that's just broken my soup-tureen. Caturah will get along well enough, if she only does as well as she knows how. She's a poor, deserted orphan, without father or mother, that I've took from the poor-house from motives of charity alone. I've always been renounced for my charitable disposition; and I know of no way I could do a better deed than to take this poor thing to bring up, and rear as if she was my own. I'm young for such a responsibility, but I shall discharge it to the best of my ability. I can't discharge this one as easy as I did Bridget, seeing she's bound to me by ties stronger than those of blood? He! he! what an inveterate punster you are! Go right straight along out of this kitchen, or I sha'n't get my work done this afternoon. You needn't think of getting up a frolic with us girls. Dora's gone out; and I'm not to be pampered with. If you should try to put your arm around my waist, I should powder that curly head of yours with the flour-dredger. Caturah, run out and empty

these scraps into the pig-pen, and pick up some chips as you come along back. No, indeed, sir, none of your frolicking down here. What? going? The water's getting cold? It can be resuscitated with a little more, if it's too cool. Don't be in a hurry. Oh, well, go, if you must. But I guess if Dora was present you wouldn't be so pressed for time. Howsomever, I guess Mr. Bethuen don't feel bad to see which way the wind blows. He's a very agreeable young man, in my opinion. So intellectual and so moral in all his faculties. A little silent and retiring, but most great men are said to be. He's pious, if ever a young man was. Hey? especially when it's pumpkin-pie. Oh, Mr. Little, you're *too* bad! he's considerable of an eater, I'm aware; and he don't pay much for his board, but he needs physical food to sustain his great spirituous efforts. If he wasn't *quite* so humbly, I believe I'd encourage his attention—Dear me! he's gone, hot water and all. Well, I hope I made him a little jealous, any how! Caturah! Caturah! what are you so long about them chips for, you idle little good-for-nothing!

Don't you presume to interfere, Dora Adams! She hasn't been whipped half enough yet, and I'm bound to have satisfaction out of her! There isn't any of the boarders around now, and I'm going to give her enough to last her. Yell away, as loud as you please, you little catamount, you! there's nobody to hear you, and go about telling of it to the neighbors. I've held in just as long as I can, and I'm not going to stop now. What has she done? She's done everything! Hasn't Mr. Greyson gone and taken board at the hotel; and isn't that corned beef that I bought a-spoiling in the barrel; and didn't I forget myself, and come to dinner to day with only one of my pads in my dress, and the boarders a-tittering, and the potatoes boiled to pieces because I was so put out and frustrated with only this plaguey little thing to help me, doing everything wrong, and hurrying me so that I had no time to tend to the most conspicuous portion of my toilet! What has she done, indeed? If you was in the kitchen a little more, you wouldn't have to ask. A-curling your hair on your neck, and sweeping and dusting with gloves on for fear of spoiling your pretty hands, and I a slaving in the kitchen to support you. Do you dare—do you dare to walk up dilapidately and take my whip out of my hands and break it up before my face and eyes! You think she's been punished enough! do you? You don't want people thinking and saying that I'm cruel and

unjust to the orphan, for *my* sake. Oh, you're extremely considerate! but who's going to know it, if you don't tell of it yourself, and we the only souls about the house? Mr. Bethuen is reading in his room right overhead! Why didn't you tell me *that* in the first place? She's deserved all she's got, and more too; but, of course, I should have taken a more suitable time to administer correction, if I'd have dreamed I was interrupting the studies of one of my boarders. Quit that snivelling, Caturah, this instance; don't you know you're interrupting a minister of the gospel that's going to be? and put your cape on your shoulders, and take this three-cent piece and go to the grocery and buy yourself some gingerbread, since you haven't had any dinner. If anybody asks you what you've been crying about, you can let on as if you fell down and hurt you. Don't you *dare* to tell 'em any other story, Miss, if you know what's best for yourself. Ain't hungry, hey? Well, I guess you'll come to your appetite soon enough. You needn't think because I've allowed Miss Adams to have her way this time, that it's going to do you any good to be sulky. Dora, do you go up and ask Mr. Bethuen if he knows what's good for a burn. I don't expect you to *say* that Caturah has scalded herself, but it won't harm your conscience to intimidate as much, if it comes handy.

If the dishes are washed and the floor swept, you can take your spelling-book and sit down till it's time to put on the tea-kettle, Caturah. You sha'n't have it to say that you're overworked. And be sure and call me down at five o'clock.

Dear! dear! I hope I sha'n't feel quite so irritable after I've laid down a while and got rested. I *did* whip her rather hard, I must confess; but I was awfully out of temper about that padding, and Mr. Greyson's leaving. He was one of my best boarders, and I *did* have faint hopes of—hi! ho! chances are getting fewer and fewer all the time; and to think of that impudent fellow asking me at the table if I wasn't getting to be a little one-sided in my views of matters and things, and I never knew what he meant till I looked in the glass afterwards. It was enough to vex a saint. I didn't think Dora had spunk enough to walk up, as she did this afternoon, and take that stick out of my hands and snap it in two. Such a timid thing, afraid to say her soul's her own, and put upon by me as much as she is, I didn't suppose would have the courage to interfere. My! her eyes blazed like stars, and all for that little beggar. I see I must use more circumspection. I hope Mr.

Bethuen was so emerged in study that he didn't hear what was going on. I guess I'll call Dora and tell her she may go to Mr. Little's store and select that blue Thibet this afternoon. It won't do to go too far.

CHAPTER VIII.

MR. CARP'S HER BREAD UPON THE WATERS.

THINGS are in excellent trim, and I trust that, for once, the fates will smile upon my prospects. I've had so much vanity and vexation of spirit, lately, that I don't feel as if I could put up with much more, without giving up, once for all. I'm getting as yellow as an old Leghorn, and I'll have to hang myself in a bleach barrel, and press myself out, if I keep on wrinkling up the way I have lately. But it won't do to talk about brimston when there's ministers expected. It's time he was here, now, and there is nobody in hearing to prevent my singing it as soon as I hear him come into the parlor. I'm going to strike up as if entirely unaware of his proximity, the instance I detect his footsteps in the parlor; he'll pause to listen; of course he'll not interrupt me till I'm through, and being supposed to never dream of his presence will render the effect much more powerful. If he's as green as I think he is, it will be just the thing. I've set it to the tune of "Greenland's Ice Mountains," which is his peculiar favorite, and my guitar accompanies it beautifully.

Hark! that's the hall door; he's coming in, and now's the moment. "Strike while the iron is hot." Hum! (Sings.)

From Pennyville to Boston,
Which ocean breezes fan,
You will not come across one
That equals this young man
He points the road to ruin,
A burning, shining light—
His name is T. Bethuen,
Or Timothy, by right.

The world's deceitful pleasures
They have no charm for him,
He's laying up his treasures
Where moths cannot get in.
His grace it is amazing
In one so very young;
The Lord he's ever praising
With sweetness on his tongue

That heathen in the Ganges
Their little children throw,
His mind it near deranges
To think it must be so:
He shows so much devotion
It would not me surprise
If o'er the raging ocean
To rescue them he dies

Oh, how can helpless wimmen
 Support this noble youth?
 There's one whose name is Slimmens
 Would fly with him, in truth.
 She'd give a million dollars
 For his aspiring wings—
 She stitches all his collars
 And shirts and other things
 She's proud to be permitted
 To do her mite in this;
 Perhaps the socks she's knitted
 May lead the path to bliss!
 "Her bread upon the waters"
 She casts "from pole to pole"—
 Oh, would earth's sinful daughters
 Would think about their soul!

Instead of paints and ringlets
 And fleeting female charms,
 Would sigh for angels' winglets
 And saluts' protecting arms!
 Oh, had I T. Bethuen
 To ever point the way,
 I'd shun the road to ruin,
 And join the church to-day—y—y!

For the land sake! Mr. Little! where did you come from? I thought as much as could be that it was Mr.—in fact I hadn't the least idea there was a living creetur nigh. I've just been singing "Greenland's Icy Mountains" to keep up my choir-practice a little. Did you hear me? Well, the words *were* a little different in some parts. I found 'em here on the table in pencil-mark. I guess Dora must have composed 'em; she seems to be dreadful fond of that stiff-looking, mumble-mouthed youngster. I shouldn't be surprised if it made a match. A pretty couple they'll be to begin the world, neither of them a penny. I suppose he'll preach, and she'll bleach, and the Lord will take care of them. And, really, I don't suppose Dora'll ever do any better. A destitute orphan like her don't commonly have too many chances to throw away. I shall give her a bed and a set of dishes, and some pretty good clothes for her wedding outfit if I find out she's really engaged.

La, Mr. Little! how close you do set! Supposing some prying eyes should see into this bodoor, with you a setting so close to my side and trying to take my hand. The tonsorial world would immejetly say that if we wasn't engaged, we ought to be. But you needn't stir, upon that account. Don't move—don't! Alvira Slimmens has a soul that scorns the voice of scandal; besides, there isn't a living creature about to see or hear, or tell tales. You might get your arm about my waist in spite of all I could do, and there'd be nobody to fly to my rescue. You're glad of it, for you've got something very particular to tell me? Oh, Mr.

Little, don't say it *too* unexpectedly, or you'll flustrate me so that I sha'n't know what answer to make you. Of course I shall give my consent; but I don't want to do it without a little reflection. Though I've long anticipated this moment, yet now it is here, I'm so—so happy—so delirium with emotion—dearest, may my head repose a moment upon your shoulder while I strive to recover my perceptive facilities?—

You are pleased to inform me that Mr. Bethuen is *not* the only chance for dear little Dora to be settled in life? She's confessed to you that she returned your love—she! I didn't think she'd have the immodesty—and you've thought it proper to announce the engagement to me, as her friend and guardian, and to say that you'd like the wedding to come off New Year's day if I think proper! Well, I *must* say, that's rather hurrying up matters, for two children like you. Three weeks' engagement! If I promised to marry one of the masculine sex, I'd impel him to wait three years instead of three weeks. Dora *did* object; but you was afraid she was overworking herself, and thought she might as well take you first as last, as you never expect to be *worthy* of her any how. You are a dreadful modest young man, Mr. Little, for a drygoods merchant, and the best looking person in Pennyville. You knew Dora would jump at the chance; anybody would. But I don't like your hinting about her being overworked. I've done a good part by that girl, and I don't bear her no ill-will now. If you and she are a mind to get married, and will promise to board with me the first year, and take that front room and bed-room at eight dollars a week, why, as I can't help it, I shall give my consent, and do all I can to help Dora about her sewing, and countenance the match by giving her a good wedding—and that's the end of it. Of course you'll pay all the expenses, and see that she is provided with all she wants! Well, just as you please about that. I've no doubt you're better able than a poor boarding-house female to do what's handsome, and if you want to give a party, or anything, I'm willing to take the trouble of the arrangements. I've ever regarded you as an elder sister might a brother, and I trust you'll feel free to do as you please. Dora bade you say how grateful she felt for all my kindness, and that she hoped still to remain with me, if it was as a boarder instead of a pardner? She's a good little thing as ever lived—Dora is—and I don't find fault with her, if she has deserted me rather unexpectedly. I wish you both well. Going

to tell her the result of our interview? Go along, then, and don't be silly!

There, snap went *that* string to my bow! there's only one left now, which is the crookedest stick of all. I might as well abandon everything else, and do what I can to enamel Mr. Bethuen. Mr. Greyson's gone, and Mr. Barker I've recently heard was engaged to Philista Podd, where he spends so much of his evenings, and now Mr. Little has the audacity to come and tell me that he is going to marry Dora. I've seen it—I've seen it, these weeks and weeks, that they were in love with each other, but I trusted *some* chance would break it up. Poor Dora! I suppose I ought to be glad, on her account; but I *can't*! it's more than human nature is culpable of, to rejoice in her good luck. I never thought *she* 'd make the best match in Pennyville! it all comes of her curls, and pink cheeks, and innocent, baby looks. Heigh-ho! There's one consolation; they'll pay a good price for their board, and will be good company. I'd better put on a smiling face, and make the best of it, in a peculiar point of view, that's all.

I wonder what kept Timothy Bethuen from coming in, this evening, as he promised. If anything's wrong *there*, I'll give up and done with it. I'm glad nobody but Mr. Little heard me singing little verses. He won't dare to make fun of me now, since he's an object for keeping me in good-humor. Besides, he'll likely forget all about it, his mind was so full of another matter. I was completely taken aback, when I saw it was him. The first of January! heigh-ho! Didn't I say I'd give all I was worth to stand in Dora Adams's old shoes?

CHAPTER IX.

THE PROFESSOR AT THE TEA TABLE.

Do you know what I've made up my mind to do, Dora? It's to give you my wedding-dress. It's just as nice as the minute it went into that trunk; nobody's ever seen it but you and me, and it can be fitted over for you beautifully. You remember I paid three dollars and a half a yard for that dress; it's real brocade, and shines like silver; it'll be very becoming to your fair skin and golden hair. Oh, you needn't object to accepting it! I can't bear the sight of it; and it's just yellowing and creasing up lying away as it does. I never expect to need it, now; if I marry, as I likely

shall *some* time, it will not be to one who will wish to see me covered with the fineries and artificials of this world. A plain drab—or at most, an ashes of roses—will be more suitable to my new spear. The wife of a minister must not be a stumbling-block in the way of her husband, exposing herself to the remarks and distractions of the congregation. I shall dress very plain, after I'm married; I've been thinking I should give up curls, but I'm not quite settled as to whether I shall or not. O no! it ain't a bit too good for a person in your circumstances; you're to be the bride of a drygoods merchant, and must confirm to *his* position. That, and the silk he gave you, and your new Thibet for common occasions, will make a very pretty tournure.

Go up to that closet and unlock the trunk—here's the key—and take the dress out and bring it in here. Let's try it on, and baste it over, at once. You've no time to spare between this and New Year's. And bring along the camfire-bottle off my bureau; I *may* have to have resource to it when I gaze once more upon my bridal robe. That man was an awful villain, a scoundrel of the deepest dye. I hope to hear before I quit this lunatory spear that he's met his death by hanging. He gave Mehitable Green the greatest triumph of her existence. She can't pass me to this day, but she looks as if she wanted to put her thumb to her nose and wiggle her fingers. If she didn't deem it vulgar, I haven't the least doubt she'd do it.

It's a little broad across the shoulders and long in the skirt, but that's better than being too small. My fingers tremble so I can hardly baste it up; I don't know what's the matter, but I expect that bound-girl's wearing on my nerves; of course it's not fond memories of the past. I'm not so sentimental as I was before I came into this boarding-house. I think there's something about cooking vittals less congealing with sentiment than trimming bunnits. Besides, recently, I've had my attention called to topics of more serious consideration than the romantic dreams of thoughtless girlhood. After you're married, Dora, and the fuss is over, and I've time to reflect upon it, I do not know but I shall join the church.

There's a ring loud enough to start up that stupid Caturah, I hope. Eh? gentleman in the parlor wants to see the mistress of the house. A stranger? Another boarder, maybe. Is my hair all right, Dora? I like to forget that I washed my face since I came up; hand

me that pink-saucer a minute. You go on with your basting while I go down and see what he wants.

Good afternoon, sir. A remarkably fine day for this season of the year, sir. Yes, sir, I am the proprietor of this establishment, or the proprietress I suppose I ought to say, he! he! sir. The feminine portion of community so seldom appear in a business capacity that I sometimes shrink from the responsibility of appearing as the head of so extensive and flourishing an establishment, especially as I am placed in an unprotected situation without father or brother, and feel myself young to assume so much, but must say, if I do say it myself, that I have generally given as much satisfaction as

"Those that are older than me—
Of many far wiser than me—"

as dear dead Poe has it in his touching and graphical poem. But perhaps you are not fond of the Muses, and I will not seek to infuse my taste for them into the bosom of another. Well, really, sir, I do not know, until I allow my memory to summon up and ascertain. A good, sizeable room, with a fire? I'm very much crowded, at present, I may say; am reluctantly impelled to refuse applications every day, so general a favorite has my house become. However, I will see. Did I understand you that you were a *single* gentleman? The reason of my making what may seem a peculiar inquiry, is that I do not accommodate families. If you wished a room for *yourself*, I might try, even if prompted to resign my own apartment for a season, until a vacation occurs. Ah, indeed? a widower, without children? May I ask how long you have been afflicted? Only three years? I thought I perceived the traces of some settled melancholy still upon your features. I have been—I know not whether fortunately for myself or otherwise—gifted with sympathetic facilities which ever enable me to detect and console another's sorrows. So that, really, I can hardly be said, in the common acceptance of the term, to take boarders. It is more as if I were surrounded by a family of brothers. Of course, worldly prudence dictates to me to accept a merely nominal sum in return for the food and drink which I bestow; but food and drink for the body is not *all*, sir; and I make no charge for that sisterly counsel and nursing care which is invaluable. There is something in your countenance which interests me. I shall endeavor to furnish you such a room as you desire. If you have a chamber entirely to yourself, with a stiddy fire, and

lights, my terms will be four dollars and a half a week, payable weekly. Doubtless you can obtain a room at the hotel for four dollars. But not a *home*—the paltry consideration of fifty cents a week is but small return for a *home* to him who stands in need of such. Doubtless you yourself feel this. Did you say what your business was?—excuse me, but I have forgotten—and how long your stay in Pennyville will probably be. A professor of spiritus-physiology? Dear me! you don't say so! I've ever had a taste for phrenology, fizzleology, and all the kindred sciences. Your stay will depend upon your success as a lecturer and the number of pupils you obtain? Then, no doubt, you will remain the winter with us. The people of Pennyville are noted for their patternage of lecturers and men of intellectibility. I, myself, am but *e pluribus unum*, as our national emblem has it; I am one of many who represent the brain of this community. Allow me, in their name, to welcome you to our vicinity. You will not regret it, nor the price you will pay for board in my household. I have a number of young gentlemen in my family, and I shall endeavor to induce them all to attend your course of lectures and become your pupils. When did you say I might expect you? You would like your room to be in readiness by tea-time, if possible? I will make the effort, sir. I feel in serving you that I am serving the cause of spiritus physiology. Good afternoon, until we meet again, "around the festal board," as Byron has it.

A new boarder, Dora! I've ordered a fire and clean sheets in Mr. Greyson's room; which I'm glad now, all things considered, he give up just as he did. He was such a cold, observing person, I was always afraid of him; and the new boarder pays fifty cents a week more, and is so interesting. He wears specs, and a white cravat, and has a high forrid and a low voice, and is a widower, not over thirty years of age, and a *professor*! Professor of what? Why, of spiritus-physiology, or some such beautiful thing, I don't precisely remember what. But his hair is as black as jet, and he has such a sweet, solemn kind of a smile, he interested my feelings at once. I hope he'll get a good class, so as to remain here as long as possible. I suppose he'll be only a transitory boarder, but "great oaks from little acorns grow," and who can tell what may arise from his pausing in Pennyville and selecting this as his stopping-place?

Come to think, I believe I'd rather buy you a new dress out-and-out, and let this be just as

it is for the present. There's a very nice piece of white satin at Parker's, which would just be the thing, and this brocade is rather heavy for you. Oh, you've cut into it, have you? Well, never mind; only I thought that what might be opprobrious to a minister's wife, might not be to a professor's. It was merely a fancy that occurred to—go ahead, now you've began, and make it as pretty as you can.

Gentlemen, allow me to introduce to you Professor Lankton, who has come among us for the interesting purpose of making our citizens familiar with the elevating and instructive science of spirituo-phycology. Professor Lankton, allow me to introduce to you *my family*, as I take pleasure in terming it.

"We're a band of brothers"—

that is, all but myself and Dora, who are the sister spirits who minister to the wants of this interesting group. I feel that there will be a congeniality of sentiments between you. The advent of a person into our midst of the character of this stranger cannot but have an elevating influence upon our citizens. I have promised him that Pennyville shall give him a glowing welcome; and I believe that my own family will not be behindhand in extending its patronage to profound learning mingled with the modest timidity of real genius. I speak a word for this gentleman, who is now for the first time seated at this board. He "was a stranger, and I took him in." Let him not discover to his sorrow that I have given too arduous encouragement. Mr. Smith, I believe you have the renting of our Town Hall. Give it to him for as moderate a compensation as you can in justice to yourself. I myself have taken a season ticket for the first course of his lectures, and hope all those I see gathered around me will follow my example. If an unprotected female can afford to encourage the arts and finances, I am sure her brothers will not hesitate to follow in her footsteps. But, really, in my ardor, I had forgotten your tea, gentlemen. I will pour it now. Better late than never, if it is a little cold. Tea? Of course it's tea—the best of young hyson. Oh, you couldn't decide what particular style of beverage it was expected to be regarded? Perhaps, if you smoked a few less cigars, Mr. Porter, your taste would be more detective. What's that? Tarts? No, I haven't any tarts for tea, as I know of. I suppose you are *trying* to be funny at my expense. And I'm trying to be saving at yours? He's only in jest, Professor. My family are ever in such good spirits—all life and emanation?

CHAPTER X.

THE DOUBLE WEDDING—MARRIED AT LAST!

Who'd have thought it! Who *would* have thought it, Dora, that you and I should both be married upon the same day? Four weeks ago you were not even engaged—four days ago I wasn't! and here we are actually dressing for the wedding! No mistake *this* time. The bridegrooms are in the house—in their own rooms, getting ready. If it wasn't that they were so near, and we had such circumstantial evidence of the truth of what's going to happen, I should hardly durst to credit my own sensations. The fact is, I never have quite recovered from that shock—you know to what I allude—and I sometimes feel as if I was in a dream, especially as the time draws nigh, and the same sensations begin to agitate me as on that fatal night.

You look heavenly, Dora, with your bridal veil, and curls, and that white silk. I wish I was half as handsome! I can afford to own it, now that we're both sure of a husband, though I never did consider myself as fair-complected as you. How tasty it was of Mr. Little to send to Lowell for them exquisite bouquets, one for each of us. He's a fine man, and I wish you good luck of him. Just pin my veil here, with this pearl pin, won't you? Why, child, how cold your hands are, and you're actually trembling! Well, I'll confess, I'm a good deal frustrated, but I don't feel so agitated as all that. You're as pale as a ghost. Was that Mr. Little speaking in the hall? Bless me, if you ain't as red as a piny the minute you hear his voice! Set down and compose yourself. I'm afraid we shall make some blunder, if you don't get a little composed, and I want things to go off in style this time. I want my revenge, this night, upon that old Mehitable Green, that's made me a laughing-stock for the last two years. I've included her in the invitations a-purpose to enjoy her rage; she'll be so mad she'll be fairly green, and yet she'll have to smile as sweet as a pitcher of molasses when she wishes me joy. There's the men talking in the hall. No mistake *this* time, Dora.

HOPE LINCOLN.

BY DAISY HOWARD.

"Look, brother, is she not beautiful?"

"Yes, Clara, beautiful as a poet's dream; but I fear this newly expressed wish, almost command, of our mother's will destroy all my pleasure in her society. I cannot, because my mother wishes her wealth in the family, coldly lay plans to win the love of this young creature. It has ever been my pride and pleasure to meet her wishes in all things; but this I cannot do, even though I am 'her only son, and she a widow.' Am I not in the right, Clara?"

"My noble brother is ever in the right, and yet I fear, Paul, that you will love Hope in spite of yourself."

"Why, Clara, she is younger than you are, and how should I feel to see another act in this way to my pet sister?" And, pressing his lips upon the pure brow of his young sister, Paul Vane stepped from the window out upon the colonnade.

Hope Lincoln and Clara Vane had been room-mates and inseparable friends at the same pleasant school where their mothers had been before them. They had left school at the same time, Clara to return to her home on the banks of the Rappahannock, Hope to enter upon the gayeties of a New York life. Mrs. Lincoln had been dead three years, and Hope entered upon life that saddest of all things—a motherless girl. Her father, a stern, cold man, had died a year before the opening of this tale. Hope, beautiful and wealthy, had many homes offered for her acceptance, but for the present declined making any choice of a permanent home, spending her time among her mother's many friends, for relatives she had not in the wide world. Though flattered and caressed, she was not happy; the loving heart of the orphan girl pined for sympathy and a congenial home, and when a letter came from Clara Vane, begging her, in her mother's name, to make their beautiful home her own, she left the gay city without a single regret.

Clara had been in a flutter of happiness for a week, ever since Hope's letter of acceptance came, and now that the day of her arrival had come she busied herself in loving cares for her comfort. The choicest flowers were gathered and arranged in the cheerful room which was to be their mutual sleeping apartment. She

looped the lace curtains with flowers; and, in her sweet, happy fancy, wove a beautiful wreath of fragrant roses, and garlanded the dressing-glass so soon to mirror Hope's loved face. Even yet she was not quite content, but must needs place some white violets and bright red roses upon the snowy lace-fringed pillows where in fancy she already beheld the bright head reclining. Ah, the love of our gladsome girlhood's years, how fanciful and full of poetry it is! It may be not so lasting or so strong as the love of later years, but O how beautiful, and how full of *hope*!

Mrs. Vane was a cold-hearted, scheming woman, and had already singled out Hope Lincoln, the heiress of many thousands, for her son's wife. With foolish eagerness, she revealed her plans to her children.

Paul Vane had looked forward with pleasure to the coming of sweet, childlike Hope Lincoln; but now his noble soul revolted at the mercenary plans of his mother. He had not seen Hope for two years, when, at the age of "sweet sixteen," she had passed a vacation with his sister, where she sported a glad, free thing within his home: even then the fresh, innocent heart and artless manner of Hope had troubled the calm current of his thoughts, and through the two years of separation her memory had lingered pleasantly about his heart. But his mother had destroyed all; now he would be kind and polite, yet distant, to the lady who, he suddenly fancied, *might* have grown proud and haughty after the manner of most heiresses; and yet, little, artless Hope, she could scarcely have changed in the two short years. It was while with his sister in the drawing-room that the sound of carriage wheels attracted them to the window just in time to see Hope alight.

It is evening. In the handsome parlors of Mrs. Vane sit that stately lady, her daughter, and Hope Lincoln. Surely this bright, childlike maiden cannot be the "haughty heiress" Paul Vane is schooling himself to treat politely! She reclines on a low seat at Clara's feet, and her bright head, regardless of the dignified lady, who was never known to permit such a thing, is laid upon her friend's knee. Curls of a rich golden brown float over the glistening shoulders, and catch a new beauty from the dress of

blue satin which harmonizes so beautifully with the pure white complexion. In the purple-violet eyes there lingers a dreamy light—she is thinking now of “brother” whom Clara had been talking about, that noble, brave brother whose name was ever upon her lips. Hope sat silent and still; the crimson of the closing day lit up the young head with glory as she sat listening to the praises of Paul Vane.

Well might Clara be proud of such a brother; his was a soul noble and lofty. Being eight years the senior of Clara, he had ever been a watchful friend and gentle counsellor of the pet sister he well nigh worshipped. He was a close student, and a poet at heart. Some fancied him stern; though a shadow of sternness might linger around the rich lips when in repose, when he smiled a rare sweetness radiated his whole face. His dark and rather mournful-looking eyes were full of tenderness when mingling with those he loved, yet those same eyes could flash fire at a fitting moment. Altogether the character and appearance of Paul Vane are hard to describe. I only know with others that upon his superb brow thought sat enthroned, that brow whereon was written the record of stirring and wayward intellect. I used to think it would be a lifetime happiness to be loved by such a man as Paul Vane. Excuse the slight digression, reader; indeed I could not help it.

The deep shadows of night were trailing over the lawn, almost hiding his advancing figure from Clara’s loving eyes, who, grown anxious at his long delay, had been watching from the window. The gas was lighted ere he presented himself before his mother and their guest. A cloud lowered upon the brow of Mrs. Vane.

“My son, you have tarried long to-night.”

“Yes, dear mother; but I am here at last, ready to crave your pardon. Am I forgiven, mother?”

The mother looked up with a smile to the bright, handsome face bent over her, for in her heart she worshipped her only son. “Yes, Paul, if you are more prompt in obeying my wishes next time, you are forgiven now.”

Paul, the delinquent, raised the still fair hand reverently to his lips, and passed on to welcome Miss Lincoln to Mossdale.

“Hope, this is brother Paul,” said Clara.

“Ah, Paul, I am so happy to be once more with Clara, and so glad to see you! Will you not be my brother, too?” And the sweet lips were held up for a kiss.

The stately Paul was nonplussed; in truth, she was not changed. Was this the end of all

his resolves to be distant? But he had been more than mortal had he not pressed with his own the dewy lips held up before him. Hope, in her innocent heart, felt no embarrassment in the kiss of welcome, and soon she was talking cheerfully of the happiness in store for them all.

Thus passed that first evening. Paul sought his pillow, and a close observer could see sorrow in his deep eyes, sorrow that he had so soon forgotten his fixed resolve. But he would commence anew to-morrow; he would not have it said that his mother invited the heiress to Mossdale that her son might win her broad lands for his own—at least, it should not be said with truth. But some invisible hand had surely laid a spell upon his pillow, for, despite reason, dreams *would* come of a beautiful girl in a blue satin dress, with luxuriant brown curls, and a pair of ripe, tempting lips uplifted to his own. What business had they there at such a time?

Thus passed many weeks, Hope winding herself more closely round the heart of Paul Vane each day, till he was wretched if he missed for an hour the bright form which was fast becoming the star of his idolatry. Yet he strove to hide his feelings. “Oh, if she were only poor,” he would exclaim, “how gladly would I gather her to my heart, and cherish her as woman never yet was cherished!” Yet, after every such spell of musings, his manner would be fitful, at times almost cold; but the very artlessness and childlike innocence of Hope made such coldness almost impossible. She knew so little of the world, and had such a loving, trustful nature that she witched him out of his sadness, as she termed it, in spite of himself. Once she sought Clara, and, with eyes filled with tears, told her that brother was angry with her for something, he treated her so coldly, and would not read French with her as he had promised. Clara soothed her with the words: “You must not fancy brother cold, darling; his nature is peculiar, and when he is in a deep study, or worried about out-door affairs, he is ever so.” And Clara, not knowing her brother’s secret feelings, really believed her own words. So Hope was comforted, the smiles once more brightened her face, playing at hide and seek with the tiny dimples clustered about her wee month, each one of which was a wealth of beauty in itself. Ah, Paul Vane, panoply yourself round about with pride, and absent yourself from the charmed presence, yet you cannot free yourself long from the restless little fairy who, all unconscious of her feelings, is

fast learning to love. Hope took a book, and was soon lost in its pages, for, though childish in manner, she had an intense appreciation of the beautiful and a thirst for knowledge. A superior mind could lead her to any height he willed; could form her mind after the fashion of his own.

Paul Vane, though not yet nine-and-twenty, was a close reader of character. Now a new fear presented itself; though not a vain man, he yet read the heart of Hope and understood her feelings better than she did herself, knew that in her young heart—all unrevealed to herself—was dawning a love for him. And, knowing this, he yet *must* turn away from this heaven of bliss, and coldly chill the young love that needed but love in return to bring to fruition. 'Twas a weary battle, and had to be fought again and again; but the mystic hour was dawning which was to awaken Hope's soul to the knowledge that she loved Paul Vane.

Clara Vane was betrothed to a young clergyman residing in a neighboring city. It was whilst he was on a visit to Mossdale that Hope first learned the secret of her own soul, awoke to the knowledge that the "thousand harp-strings of her soul" could vibrate but to *one name*. After the knowledge came upon her, she troubled brother, as she was wont to call him, no more. As woman ever does who loves unsought, she would shun him, flying if she heard his footsteps. It happened in this wise: One evening, Mrs. Vane had been remonstrating with her son regarding his treatment of Hope; an intimate friend had bantered him as to when he and the *heiress* would be made one; the two chafed him sadly; the consequence was, when he next saw Hope, he endeavored to treat her more coldly than usual.

He was sitting in his study buried in bitter thoughts; he had almost made up his mind to travel for a year, in order to weaken, if he could not *break*, the tie which bound him to Hope; he must not stay to bring sorrow to her young heart. 'Twas a lovely night, the air seemed filled with music, the air was heavy with the fragrance of the flowers, but they gave no pleasure to the sorrowing man; the musical plash of the fountain beneath his window fell unheeded upon his ear; the water, and trees, and the birds of night were together singing a roundelay; the moon, calm and gentle as she ever is, looked down pityingly upon a noble heart whose spirit conflict had been fought beneath her rays. It was over, and Paul Vane came out as pure gold from the baptism of sorrow that had bathed his brow with a clammy

sweat. As he gazed upon the starry night, and watched the clouds scudding like a ship over the blue waters, from his tried heart arose a prayer that the Father would bless and keep from sorrow his loved one, his first and only love. Ere the prayer had died upon his lips, the door opened, and Hope stood before him. The study was at all times open to Clara and Hope; therefore Hope felt no hesitation in entering.

"Clara has gone to walk with Mr. Erlswood, and I am lonely, and have come to beg you to read to me. Why, my brother, you have no light to-night! It may be the lady-moon gives you light to read." And, going to the window, she looked into his face. The deep sadness imprinted there appalled her. "Paul, what grieves you?"

"Nothing, Hope, nothing."

The sad tones brought tears to her eyes, and, sitting down upon the low seat at his side, she wept.

"What is it, Hope? Who is grieving now?"

"Ah, my brother, you are changed towards me; you do not talk to me or read to me, and you never sing with me now, and Clara, too, forgets me for whole days." And the bowed head was laid upon his knee, and Hope sobbed like a grieved child.

Paul's face grew pale and his lips quivered; he uttered no words, but he bent his bright, handsome head reverently over her till his own hair almost touched the golden-brown curls he longed to press passionately to his lips. "I am not changed, little sister, but I am ill and suffering to-night, and Hope, I am going away next week, to be absent a year. Leave me now, *darling*; I will tell you all to-morrow." And, passing his arm around her, he lifted her up, and, pressing a kiss upon the white, polished brow, said "Good-night."

Hope sought her own room, and flung herself upon her knees, striving with the agony surging through her heart, for in this hour came upon her the knowledge that she loved Paul Vane with a deep and idolatrous love. Now he was going away, and the earth would be darkened for evermore. Thus blindly do we go on making ourselves idols, and God pity the heart that wakes to the sad knowledge *too late*, or when the bitter thought will come that the heart's deep love has been lavished unsought.

Next day, Hope was pale and quiet; she kept closely within her own chamber, never once seeking Paul's society. In this way passed many days. Paul missed the sweet form flitting hither and thither, and at last his loneli-

ness became insupportable. "I will go mad," he moaned; "I must have sympathy and advice. I will seek Clara, and tell her all." He did so, and came away comforted. Clara, with her calm good sense, told him that he sinned against his own nature and against Hope in thus warring with his feelings. "Had he a right to wreck his own happiness, and blight her sweet life?" she asked. "What if Hope was an heiress, should two hearts be stranded upon a rock with shore in sight? It was wrong, decidedly wrong." So reasoned the wise little philosopher, Clara.

Meantime, poor Hope, the lonely orphan, wept with grief and shame, wept with fear lest the secret of her love should have been discovered. She drew from under her pillow her mother's Bible, and read till her heart was calmed. Sadly she thought of the loved dead sleeping under the acacia trees far away.

Paul was absent all next day on business for his mother. When he returned, Hope was nowhere to be found; she had wandered down to a secluded part of the lawn to weep alone. Blame her not, ye who have parents and friends; she was an orphan, and now her future looked so hopeless; Clara would soon leave them to gladden the home of her husband. Paul was going away; and she would be left alone with the cold and chilling Mrs. Vane. What wonder, then, that the orphan weeps? or that, in her childlike faith, she kneels beneath the stars and prays? The holy moonlight kissed lovingly the bowed head, lighting it as with glory. 'Twas thus Paul Vane found her, and listened unseen to her prayer for strength. A proud yet sweet smile radiated his face, and, stepping softly to her side, he raised her from the damp ground. His words were brief: "Hope, darling, I love you, have loved you from the first hour you came to dwell in my mother's house. Can you love me? Will you be my wife?"

And Hope—she was happy, O so happy! she would be lonely never more on earth. And, O joy! Paul did not know that she had loved him long ago. Had he not asked her "if she could love him?" What a change have these few words brought about! A little while ago, the wind sweeping among the trees sounded like the sobbing of a broken heart; a little while ago, the dark lashes swept the pale cheek heavily, as though fettered by tears; now, the eyes flashed back happiness and joy; the beautiful head sank low, lower still, till it rested upon his heart, and Paul whispered: "Mine for evermore!"

Under the golden glimmer of the setting sun stands sweet Hope Lincoln; she is waiting for her lover, who has ridden over to the village. "Ah, he is coming now; I see him through the trees. Dear Paul! I shall await him here. I fancy he will join me."

Already the panting steed has reached the house. Surely, the noble animal "kept pace with her expectancy, and flew," so short a time has passed since we saw him upon yonder hill-top. Love is sharp-sighted; perhaps the fluttering of a crimson dress, and a white hand waving, drew him thitherward. "Did I tarry long, my pet? I but procured the books for my mother, and hastened home again. I wished to spend this last evening at home with you, darling. Ah, Hope, to-morrow you will be mine, all mine, my own sweet wife, my beautiful one!"

'Twas a glorious autumn evening; Paul and Hope sat by the door of the conservatory, near enough to inhale the flowers' fragrance; outside lay the autumn leaves, inside the flowers whispered of summer time; the winds gently ruffled the fading leaves which, in the gorgeousness of their purple and gold, lay beneath their feet; the crimson maple-leaves fell thickly around them, some lighting amid Hope's tresses and lodging upon her dress; but ah! all unconscious is she of the beautiful covering, for near her own is throbbing a heart whose every pulse beats with love for her. Long they talked of coming joys in the years which seemed so bright, even till the twilight deepened and passed away, giving place to night, glorious night.

"It grows chill, Paul, and late; should we not return to the house?"

"O no, Hope, not yet; the moon has just risen, and the night is so beautiful. I will bring you a mantle."

Ere she could remonstrate, he was gone, and quickly returned with a mantle of costly white ermine lined with crimson velvet. This he wound about his betrothed wife; that done, she looked so beautiful that he must needs press kiss after kiss upon that upturned brow. We cannot blame him, for the temptation was very great. The moonlight but enhanced her beauty, falling upon the bright crimson dress, and the sweet face peeping out from the white ermine mantle made a picture worthy of a painter.

Sweet Hope Lincoln! she has made her a home in a loving heart; the free bird is caged now; but ah, how content in its glad captivity! The earth seemed brightening around her, the

flowers that yesterday looked pale and sad their hearts, and said, "Good-night." Ah,
whispered to-night a new and loving language "there is nothing half so sweet on earth as
ere they folded their fragrance close within love's young dream."

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JESSIE TURNER'S FORTUNES.

BY METTA VICTORIA VICTOR.

CHAPTER I.

CREAKING, creaking, with a most doleful sound, the sign-board of the inn at the Four Corners swung dismally in the melancholy wind of an autumnal evening. The inn was a rambling wooden building of good size and age, standing at a corner where two stage-routes crossed each other, and designed to catch such stray custom as these thoroughfares might yield. A dozen or more of dwelling-houses, a store, a grocery, and some shops clustered about, went by the name of the Four Corners, and was honored by a post-office thus designated upon the list.

Jessie Turner, as she sat in her little bedroom on the first floor, looking out upon the night, did not think the creaking of the sign-board disagreeable; it only added to the wildness of the darkness and the moaning wind, she thought; and she loved to indulge in fantastic dreams, as changeful and capricious as the flickering light which went and came in her apartment. For nearly opposite her window, and just across the street, was a blacksmith's shop, the ruddy glow of whose furnace illumined the street, and, whenever its fire started into greater energy, broad dashes of crimson light were flung upon the walls of her room, or flashes of gold went glimmering through its shadows. On a dark night like the present, when the wind was abroad and rain threatened, she found beauty in the old shop, with its showers of fiery sparks, its red glow, and the wild shadow of the brawny smith as he worked at his anvil. With her cheek leaning on her hand, Jessie looked out, repeating to herself that exquisite picture of Longfellow's:—

"And children coming home from school
Look in at the open door;
They love to see the flaming forge,
And hear the bellows roar,
And catch the burning sparks that fly
Like chaff from a threshing-floor."

But even this did not satisfy her vivid imagination, and she dreamed on vaguely about Orion, and Vulcan, and the ancient poetry of mythology, murmuring some lines from Horace:—

"And here the god could take,
Midst showery sparks and swathes of broad gold fire,
His lone repose, lulled by the sounds he loved," etc.

And so absorbed was she in the fantasies thus conjured up, and such a tumult was made by the swinging sign, the clamor of the anvil and bellows, and the shrieking of the rising wind, that she was unaware the stage had stopped in front of the house, the horses had been changed, and it had been driven on towards the village, six miles distant. Suddenly her door opened, and a man who might once have been fine-looking, but now with a red and besotted face, looked in, and said: "A gentleman for supper. Be quick about it, Jessie."

She went out into the next room, which was the dining-room, and where a fragile-looking lady, who sat by the fire, was putting away some sewing.

"Do not come out in the kitchen until I have replenished the fire, do not, dear mother; for it is too chilly for you there now. All the help I shall need from you will be to make the biscuits, and I will call you when I am ready for you." And the young girl pressed the invalid back in her chair with affectionate assiduity.

"But how we are to get up a tolerable supper and breakfast, Jessie, is more than I know; the materials are not in the house."

"There is our last chicken, you know, which Tom dressed this afternoon, and, with the biscuits and honey, will make a respectable tea. Don't be troubled, mother; you will see when they are on the table."

She passed into the kitchen humming a song, started the decaying fire anew, and, for half an hour, flitted about busily from kitchen to dining-room.

"Now, mother, if you will just set up the dishes while I take off my apron and brush my hair," she said, and in two moments thereafter the stranger was ushered to the table by the half drunken landlord.

"I will wait upon myself, sir; I prefer to do so," said the gentleman, who did not like his company.

When he first commenced eating, he seemed absorbed in thought, taking his tea unconsciously from the hand of Jessie, who retreated to her place by the side table and stood waiting to give such attention as he might require.

Of all the onerous and disagreeable duties strewn so thickly in the daily path of the inn-

keeper's daughter, there was nothing so repugnant to her modest and refined nature as this necessity for serving strangers. She did it gently and readily, as she did all things, but many bitter tears were shed recently in her own little room, when some order rudely given, or the coarse stare of some bad man, had shocked her sensitive spirit more deeply than usual.

Presently the stranger, having recovered from his abstraction, began to notice the exceeding neatness of the table, and the delicate manner in which its viands were prepared. He was agreeably surprised, for he had expected, at the best, but a coarse meal at this out-of-the-way Western tavern. His surprise was heightened to astonished curiosity when his glance, from scrutinizing the room, fell upon the maiden standing, sewer in hand, by the tea-urn at the small table. She had forgotten herself for the moment, and stood with head inclined listening to the wailing of the autumn wind. He had travelled through many countries, and, for so young a man, had gained much experience, but he had never beheld, in art or nature, a more exquisite picture than this so unexpectedly appearing before him; for Jessie Turner was very beautiful, and she had unconsciously taken an attitude of striking grace. The plain gingham dress could not conceal the rounded loveliness of her girlish form. Her head, slightly drooped and turned away in its listening attitude, was nobly set upon a graceful throat; the most of its redundant hair was knotted up behind, but enough curls of gleaming gold and brown were left to shade the roseate cheek and intellectual forehead. There was a refinement in her demeanor which the most fortunate lady of the land might have coveted, and which could not escape the appreciation of a cultivated eye. The stranger forgot to eat, and stared at her so fixedly that, when she at last looked up, a bright blush breaking over her cheek reminded him of his rudeness. He immediately cast down his eyes and began hastily drinking his tea.

"May I trouble you for another cup of tea?"

As she came for his cup, he remarked the smallness and delicacy of her hands.

"Well, I should say that here was a star strangely driven aside from its proper sphere," he thought. And when she handed him his tea, he spoke out, moved by something suggestive in the dreamy look of her face: "The wind has a wild sound to-night."

"Yes," she said; "I love it."

She, too, had spoken without reflection, and now was sorry that she had expressed any kind

of a sentiment to a stranger which might provoke farther conversation; so she retreated to her mother's side, who was sitting at her sewing-stand at the back of the room, and remained there until the meal was finished.

When he entered the room, the traveller had bowed to the person who sat sewing, without particularly remarking her appearance, for he was, as we before observed, very much engrossed in his own reveries. Now, as he finished his repast and arose from the table, he decided upon the best means of gratifying his curiosity with regard to his beautiful attendant, and, with a courteous inclination to the landlady, he said: "With your permission, I will sit here a short time. The host says that I cannot have a fire in my room, and I do not like the tobacco and noise of the bar-room."

His request was pleasantly acceded to, and, for five minutes, he busied himself conjecturing what position the delicate lady who was politely answering his remarks about the weather could hold in this inn, whether she was boarder, guest, or what? When Jessie, who was flitting in and out, clearing away the table, at length called her mother, it was still almost impossible to credit that these two interesting women could be the wife and child of the stolid landlord who was dealing out liquor to his customers behind the bar in the adjoining room.

"Here is some romance of real life, and a painful one," he mused.

The conversation branched off from the weather upon several topics, and he found his companion not only refined, but unusually intelligent. He himself was agreeable and well-informed, and Mrs. Turner did not hesitate to converse freely with him. The interest was evidently mutual. In the midst of an animated conversation upon people and books, the daughter, having finished her work, took her place near her mother. She did not talk much, but her bright, expressive face, and kindling eye spoke for her. The astonishment of the traveller momentarily increased, and he would almost have put some questions to them concerning their personal history, but dared not. He learned incidentally that Mrs. Turner had come formerly from New York, where her husband had failed, and that she had lived out West but a few years. A shade of sadness upon her brow and in the depths of her eyes, which never left them, even when she smiled, told him silently of suffering of a mental kind quite equal to her physical ill-health.

Mr. Carolyn was the name of the traveller. He could scarcely have been twenty-five years

of age. They gathered from what he said that, after leaving college, he had made a flying visit to England and the Continent, stopping, however, a short time in Germany to complete some study there, that he had returned to his own country about a year ago, and had been travelling the most of the time, and was now going West to transact some business for his father.

Jessie Turner listened to his racy and brilliant remarks, almost entirely free from the vanity and superciliousness which young men who have travelled are apt to possess, with an admiration which spoke much more plainly from her earnest eyes than she was aware of. It was but seldom indeed that she had an opportunity of listening to personal reminiscences of places she so wished to behold. Books had been almost her only society, and the world which to her was most real was that ideal one in which her fancy dwelt luxuriously, and which all the dreariness of her daily experience could not prevent her enjoying. She "fared sumptuously every day" upon the unsubstantial delicacies of her dreams. Now she listened to this young gentleman who came out of the actual world with that interest which one would give to a messenger from a far country. And he was a fascinating talker, not only to her, but to her more experienced mother. There was no apparent haughtiness in his manner, and still a kind of princeliness distinguished him—that noble way of speaking, looking, and acting which wins the involuntary homage of all hearts. Once or twice the fire leaped out of his dark eyes, and a smile, vivid, swift, and sweet, played about his mouth, which made him, for the instant, superbly handsome. Several times, when giving utterance to a happy sentiment, he turned to the young girl, as if instinctively looking for the sympathy which beamed from her countenance.

In the midst of their conversation, loud voices arose in the adjoining bar-room. The stranger pursued his remarks as if not hearing them, for he noticed that his companions were uneasy. As the tumult increased, the face of the older lady grew paler and paler, while that of the daughter flushed with mortification; for the voice of the landlord could plainly be heard, among others, in drunken and noisy altercation. A violent quarrel, in which oaths, blows, and crushing benches became conspicuous, was going on, and reached such a height that Mrs. Turner, trembling and alarmed, arose and hurried to the door.

"Do not expose yourself, for Heaven's sake!"

exclaimed the gentleman, springing to detain her.

"But my husband!" she exclaimed, in a voice of anguish.

At that moment, there was a cry and a heavy fall. She flung open the door, and went in. Two or three men were making their escape from the room, and a couple of others were lifting the landlord from the floor. Their efforts and his wife's agony were of no avail; in falling, his temple had struck so heavily against the projecting corner of a bench that he was immediately killed.

If ever a delicately reared woman had suffered the degradations and mortifications attendant upon her position as the wife of one who swiftly passed down the road between a wine-bibbing gentleman and a shameless sot, that woman was Mrs. Turner. Her husband's complete failure in business, six years previous to this time, was his first excuse for giving unrestrained liberty to the flames of appetite which he had hitherto smothered. His downward career had been as swift as it was miserable, until he had finally taken refuge in the occupation of an inn-keeper, where he had little to do but sell to others and himself partake of the unhumanizing cup. His wife had endured the bitterness of this change with a dignity and fortitude most admirable; her health had failed under her sufferings, and still she had not deserted him, resolved to try all that patience could do, even after love and respect were extinct. It may be that she had sometimes looked forward to the time when dissipation should put an end to a life so much worse than worthless, with some kind of hope for her daughter's sake. If so, she had not contemplated the shock of this sudden and awful death, in the midst of violence and hate.

Let us not attempt to record the distress of that night.

Lewis Carolyn, although his business was pressing, and he had expected to go on his way the next morning, could not shake off the interest he felt in the afflicted and almost friendless widow and child. Although the house was crowded with the curious and some of the kind-hearted among the neighbors, there seemed no one upon whom they could rely for friendship or aid. However much *they* were to be pitied, the universal feeling was that there was no loss in the death of the wretched man. Mr. Carolyn staid until the funeral was over; he even—for he was wealthy as well as a Christian gentleman—paid the expenses of the funeral without mentioning the matter to the widow.

She did not learn the fact until after he had bidden them a kind and earnest farewell.

The parties concerned in the quarrel were arrested, but, as it turned out at the examination that the deceased had forced the quarrel upon the man who had knocked him down, that the deed was done in self-defence and without any intention of serious injury, and that the other persons had merely interfered to draw away the deceased, who was much intoxicated at the time, they were released.

CHAPTER II.

"At length it is finished."

So said Jessie Turner as she laid down her pen and pushed away from her the heap of manuscript. The weariness which had paled her cheek passed away, so, dropping her head upon her hand, she dreamed of the future reward of her labors. She looked out upon a winter sunset sky streaked with purple and gold. The little room in which she sat was cold, for it was unwarmed by the genial heat of any fire; but she did not now realize the privation. The shawl she had folded over her shoulders fell back; the curls which shadowed her flushed cheek were thrust away from her fair, intellectual forehead; her eyes rested on the western sky, whose glory was reflected in her countenance. For half an hour she sat absorbed in pleasing anticipations, and that unclouded sunset could not be brighter than her hopes.

"My novel will bring me fame—will bring me money," murmured the ambitious child of sixteen, and, breaking from her reverie, she smoothed her hair before the little mirror and hastened out into the adjoining room.

Here there was a cook-stove with a fire in it; a carpet upon the floor; two tables, one covered with books and sewing, the other with culinary utensils; likewise all those various articles of furniture necessary in a room comprising sitting, dining, and cooking apartment. In a rocking-chair near the fire sat Mrs. Turner, looking very much of an invalid. She was hearing a lesson in geography for a boy of five who stood by her side. Little Percy had been asleep in his bed upon that eventful night in which the tragedy of his father's death occurred, and had not been an actor in any of its scenes. Three months had elapsed since then. The family had very soon left the ghostly old inn, and, with the remnant of furniture which was still their own, had found refuge in

a little house not far away, and were eeking out a living as best they might.

"Dear mother," said Jessie, as she entered, "I forgot that you must need your tea; I will hasten to get it."

"There is but little to get, Jessie," was the half sad, half smiling reply.

"Enough for Percy and myself, mother, if it only were not for you. You cannot live as we can. But just bear up a little longer; my great novel is finished; that splendid work which is to bring us so many comforts by its sale! There is no doubt that we shall be rich soon, mother, and then you shall have—what do you want most? At least, you shall have dainty food to flatter that poor appetite of yours."

The young girl spoke laughingly, in a mock-heroic tone, as she swung a bucket on her arm and hastened out in the cold air after water with which to fill the tea-kettle. Soon she returned with purple, tingling fingers, but with glowing cheeks.

"Now, if I could only get you something nice," she said, as she filled the kettle and set out the table.

"There is neither butter nor sugar," said Mrs. Turner, "but at least there is plenty of flour."

"And no money?" asked Jessie.

"There are ten cents, to pay the postage on the letter which you expect from the post-office to-night. We will not begin to complain, my dear, while we have wood, water, and flour."

"It is not for myself I am troubled, mother; but you cannot endure privation."

"I have endured a great deal," was the quiet reply.

"Too much, too much," murmured the young girl, as she kissed her mother's pale cheek, with the tears in her eyes. The next moment, she was singing gayly about her work, Heaven never having gifted a poverty-stricken young thing with a lighter, happier, and more hopeful heart.

"Come, mamma, Percy, our luxurious repast is prepared." And the trio gathered about the little table. "It looks stylish, what there is of it," she continued, in the same merry voice. "How fortunate that we do not take sugar in our tea, now that there is none! We have plum-sauce, if we have no butter. 'The darkest cloud has a silvery lining,' which, you will observe, is very apropos." Here she helped her brother to another slice of bread, and continued: "Do you know, I think I am just the one of all persons to be poor? I am naturally so indolent that it requires pressing realities to awaken my energies. But you do not eat,

mamma; let me toast this bread for you." As she went to the pantry for a fork, she espied a small piece of butter, enough for the slice of bread, which bread was soon browned and laid upon the invalid's plate, who ate part of it, and gave the rest to Percy.

As if no thought or fancy of her innocent heart need be concealed, the daughter talked on, half seriously, half playfully, to the kind parent who sympathized with even her romantic dreams, encouraged her ambition, and stimulated her to rise above circumstances, however degrading and appalling, and who, in her own broken and blighted heart, still built up a world of anticipation, in which that gifted, beloved, and beautiful child found a befitting home.

As twilight deepened into night, Jessie lighted a lamp, and, after neatly putting away the tea things, brought forth the concluding chapters of her romance, and read them to her mother. Of course, the book was full of faults, with a superabundance of fancy, and a lack of naturalness in the characters; nevertheless, it was full of the first evidences of genius which might ripen to better fruit. It was natural that the cool discretion of the critic should be lost in the fond admiration of the mother, and Mrs. Turner could not but bestow praise upon this first effort. The desire to attract the attention of the world was not half so strong in the young author's bosom as the hope that, by the cultivation of her talents, she should some time be able to raise her dear mother above the necessity for labor.

"It is very fine," said little Percy, in a pompous tone, "it is very nice indeed. When it is printed, I can have a new jacket, can't I?" The sister stroked his golden curls with a smile. "I like it better than geography," he continued, emphatically.

There was a hero in the girl's romance who had a surprising resemblance in many respects to the young gentleman who had so singularly formed their acquaintance, during that time of trouble, at the inn. Mrs. Turner remarked it with a quiet smile, but said nothing of her discovery; she was content that he should remain at present the unconscious ideal of Jessie's artless heart, thinking that the first better acquaintance with men of equal cultivation whom she might sometimes meet would do away or modify the impression.

"I like it as well as 'the Assyrian come-down,'" repeated the boy, determined to applaud.

His fair sister laughed, as she arose and tied her hood, preparing to walk to the post-office,

which was not far away, and there was a full moon. "The eastern mail must be changed," she said, "and I am so anxious that I cannot wait until morning. Ah, precious dime!"—as she balanced it on her finger-tip—"how much worse than wasted will you be, if expended on a cruel refusal!"

She went out, and returned soon with a joyous face; she had three or four papers, and a letter postmarked New York. Throwing off her hood, she sat by the lamp, and broke the large red seal with trembling hands. As she read, the light died from her smile and the color from her cheeks. The anxious parent, who regarded her, had no need to ask if the news were bad. No one, save the enthusiastic and inexperienced child herself, could realize how deep was the disappointment with which she read:—

Jan. 14th, 18—.

DEAR MADAM: Your note has been received. The press is at present so crowded with works of fiction that we cannot make it profitable to negotiate for the novel you have been pleased to offer us.

We remain yours, with esteem,

Ah, well, foolish little girl, it had been an experiment of her own. Her mother, albeit she was nearly as ignorant of the details of publishing as herself, had cautioned her against too much expectancy; and yet she had hoped. She had not learned how necessary it was to have a name or friends among those who ruled the opinions of the literary world, or money to pay for her own ventures. A little western wildwood flower, "blushing unseen," in a remote and discredited region—how could it chance to obtrude itself upon the notice of its more cultivated brotherhood? She felt this first disappointment more keenly than some weightier ones which came afterwards, when the heart had been hardened by long custom to bearing them.

"Oh, mother, what are we to do now?" were her first words.

Mrs. Turner had picked up the brief letter, and read it. "To work, as we have worked, to wait, to hope, to trust in God," was the reply. "My dear child, I should love to see your gifts cultivated—I should be proud to feel that by your efforts you had raised yourself to the position you are fitted to fill; yet, though it would be wrong in you to let your talents lie idle, and though ambition well-directed is ennobling, you must neither be too

easily discouraged, nor allow your mind to become too firmly fixed upon worldly splendors."

"It is not fame, it is not splendor, mother," cried Jessie, in a low voice, "it is my love for you. You will kill yourself with work; day by day, I must see you ply your needle, when I feel that every stitch you take is one in your grave-clothes, and I have so blindly and foolishly clung to my task, and allowed you to earn the bread which I ate. 'Stitch, stitch, stitch!' Oh, mother, for women there is but this miserable resource, no matter what their abilities may be. Percy, too—he cannot be educated. Ah, I was not thinking of fame!"

Tears now began to stream down the face of the speaker. Her little brother stood by her side, and hugged her in his arms. "Don't cry, Jessie; don't cry, sis. I don't want a new jacket, and I'd far rather recite to you than go to school."

"But mamma, Percy—what can we do for her?"

"I shall soon be a man, and then I shall work for her. I shall earn a great deal of money, and buy a horse, and a house and pretty pictures in it, and mamma shall go out riding with me. And what will you have, sis?"

"I will have you to get my books printed," replied Jessie, brushing away the tears, and trying to smile cheerfully. So saying, she gathered up her manuscripts, and locked them away in a drawer.

Although that was a sad day on which Jessie finished her first book, and consigned it to the oblivion of a drawer, sadder and still sadder ones followed in its wake. The Four Corners was but a poor place for a family to get its living by sewing, so that cold and hunger prowled about the door. Then came the greatest terror of all. Jessie awoke, one night, and found her mother ill. Overwork and privation had brought about their legitimate results. Jessie put the last few sticks of wood in the stove when she kindled a fire to heat some stimulants for her sick mother. The gray morning found her shivering, both with apprehension and physical cold, beside the couch, where she had almost vainly toiled to relieve the sufferings so distressing to witness. After daylight, Mrs. Turner grew better, and was enabled to give some directions with regard to her own treatment. She did not wish a physician, for she thought she should rally soon and resist the attack, as she had done many times before.

"Why do you not go to the fire? You look cold," she asked of Jessie, who stood tenderly regarding her.

"There is no fire, mother. What shall we do? Percy will cry when he gets up and finds none, and you will suffer."

"Can you not sell that little table?" It was the first time the necessity for exposing their extreme poverty had been forced upon them, and the white face of the sick woman flushed as she mentioned it. The table spoken of was a beautiful but old-fashioned piece of furniture, which Jessie often referred to as their "sole relic of former grandeur." "Did not Miss Goodall admire it very much the last time she was in here, Jessie? We have heard that she is to be married soon, and perhaps she will take it. She said it was unique, and that she should hope to find one like it when she went east."

Miss Clara Goodall was the daughter of the sole merchant of the Four Corners. There is no neighborhood so small nor so far to the west but that it has its "aristocracy." Mr. Goodall was rich, and Miss Goodall was the shining star of the Four Corners aristocracy. She was a rather pretty-looking, not very refined girl of nineteen. She had been in the habit of petting Jessie Turner, because she knew Jessie thought her handsome, and it was gratifying to her good-natured vanity to perceive the kind of youthful admiration with which that unsophisticated child regarded her rosy mouth, long eyelashes, beautiful dresses, and white hands—an admiration so totally free from envy; then it was well known that Mrs. Turner was of an "older family" than any in that vicinity, and had once been wealthy; and there were two or three—among others, Dr. G—— and his wife—who treated her with the respect which her birth and education merited, despite her present poverty; so that Jessie was not entirely friendless in her destitution, only that it was bitter, this first crushing of pride, this first letting of the world into the secrets of home.

"I will ask her, mother," said Jessie, "as soon as it grows late enough for me to venture to call."

Percy now came for some assistance about his dressing; his little hands were blue with cold, but he repressed his fretfulness when told how ill his mother was. He went out into the road, and gathered up two or three pieces of board, and came in quite proud of his treasure; his sister replenished the fire with them, and gave him his breakfast of bread and milk. At nine o'clock, she ventured to start for Miss Goodall's. She found that one of her shoes was ripped, and her sense of neatness rebelled at appearing in the street with it; but duty urged, and, bidding her brother keep good

watch with mamma, she went out on her unpleasant errand.

With an agitated heart, she rang the bell at the door of the stately brick house. A servant ushered her into the parlor, where Miss Clara, in curl-papers and dressing-gown, was practising music, not anticipating so early a call.

"It is you, is it?" she said, as Jessie came in. "Did you come to practise or to listen this morning?"—for she often played for her friend, and, indeed, had troubled her indolent self to give her a few lessons on the piano.

"Neither, Miss Clara," replied her visitor, as she sat down, trying to draw her ripped shoe under her dress, so as to escape those sharp, but good-natured eyes. "I cannot stay long, for my mother is sick. I came to ask—if you did not—wish to buy that little table which you spoke of the other day."

Miss Goodall had been reading a work upon English homes, and had suddenly conceived a passion for ancient furniture and articles of *vertu*. She had looked with covetous eyes upon the work-table, of solid rosewood, and black with age, whose twisted legs and elaborately carved ornaments had excited her newly-awakened passion for the antique; so she answered, with sufficient readiness—

"Does your mother wish to dispose of it? I shall like very much to buy it. How much does she ask for it?"

"Mamma paid sixty dollars for it."

"But she does not expect as much as she gave for it?" asked the young lady, opening her eyes.

"O no, no, of course not," was the hasty reply. "Whatever you think would be right, and are willing to give."

The lady went to an ebony work-box, and took out her purse. "I have just twenty-five dollars, and papa will not allow me any more money this month," she said, counting the gold.

"It is enough, quite enough," answered Jessie, eagerly.

"Well, take it, then. But what possessed you to think of selling it?" she asked, suddenly, with a rude curiosity.

"Necessity," was the brief reply.

"Excuse me," said Miss Clara, as she saw the vivid red which shot into Jessie's face; "I am your friend, you know. Did you say your mother was sick? I shall be over to see her this afternoon. She is a sweet woman, your mother is."

"Thank you"—and Jessie smiled, for she loved to hear her mother praised—"we shall

be glad to see you; do not forget to come." And she moved towards the door.

Turning around with a waltzing step, Clara caught sight of her own pretty figure in a mirror, not displayed to its best advantage in a morning-dress. "Jessie," she laughed out, "don't you think I'm handsome?"

"To be sure I do," replied her companion, earnestly.

"Well, just come here, and I will show you somebody twice as beautiful. Come! take a peep at her."

Not guessing her meaning, the young girl came back, and Clara, snatching off her hood, forced her up before the glass.

"Now, you see, if my hair was out of these horrid curl-papers, and I had my prettiest dress and all my jewelry on, I should not be half so charming as you are in that faded dress. Mercy! how nicely you blush! To be sure, you are almost a child yet, but in a year or two you will have all the beaux."

"Why, Miss Goodall, how you talk!" murmured Jessie, trying to release herself, after casting one frightened look in the mirror, and seeing, not her own crimson face, but her calico dress and torn shoe.

"What I say is the melancholy truth. Do look, you little simpleton! You are twice as fair, and the color of your cheeks is so pretty, and your hair curls naturally, and as for your eyes, just compare them with my beadlike blue orbs. I can tell you one person who has fallen a victim to their brightness already, and that is—that is—guess!"—(in a whisper) "my brother James! You'd make a nice sister; we should never quarrel; and, I tell you, I don't believe you'll ever catch a better fellow than this same brother of mine. He blushes every time that I say 'Jessie.' There! he is coming through the dining-room now."

"What nonsense!" cried Jessie, almost crying with embarrassment; and, breaking from her tormentor, she fled from the house, just as James Goodall entered the parlor.

Seeing a load of wood at the corner, she bargained for it, then purchased some groceries at the store, and, meeting the old negro wood-sawyer, made him agree to come immediately and do the job she promised him.

With a lighter heart than when she left it, she returned home, found her mother somewhat better, and comforted Percy, who had grown a little peevish, with the promise of a good dinner. Her mother smiled so cheerfully when she told her how much money she had received, and she felt so relieved from the

dreadful despondency of actual want, that she scarcely sighed when Mr. Goodall's men came over and removed the table. In a village as small as that in which Mrs. Turner resided, it would be impossible for her to be entirely neglected in case of sickness. Several came in during the course of the day, bringing with them various drinks, jellies, and tempting dainties, as kind neighbors in small places very properly do.

It was not until she had crept into bed with her mother, who forbade her sitting up with her, the night of that day, that Jessie had leisure to remember the words of Clara Goodall about her brother James. Did they make that young heart beat any wilder and faster in its innocent nest? He was rich, he was tolerably good-looking, he had no bad habits, he was respected, he had a passable education. Was it not a splendid match for a poor sewing-girl? "She is mistaken," she whispered to herself; "he would never think of a child like me, and so poor, too; I am not so vain as to believe her. Yet, if he really should—no, never! Yet what a home I could give to my dear, old mother!" And Jessie Turner fell asleep, and dreamed a beautiful dream of a stranger whom she had once met, whom she remembered by the name of Lewis Carolyn.

CHAPTER III.

SPRING came, with its balmy breezes and faint odors of violets, its green valleys spangled with golden buttercups, its waters laughing at their release, its sunshine and its warmth. Mrs. Turner was ill again, and dangerously. "Spare me to my children!" was still the cry of her heart to Heaven—that bleeding, bruised, and careworn heart, which, having in itself suffered the multiplied trials of an unusually eventful and sorrowful life, would now guard, with an agony of love, those young beings alike from their own untried passions and the experience of an unfriendly world. The unselfish prayer was destined not to be granted. With the tenderest, the most constant care, Jessie watched and nursed, only to see her charge growing infinitely worse. The neighbors were very kind, but the daughter would resign her place to no one—love and anxiety gave her great powers of endurance. As the fiery fever withered those beloved lips, parching them with a thirst no liquid could cool, as the gentle brow contracted into furrows, and the bosom which had ever been so kind to her labored for breath,

struggling, struggling with the strange tenacity of the life-principle against dissolution, Jessie almost felt willing to yield to any fate which should ease such suffering.

At the close of a lovely day in May, the fever, the spasms, and all the pain of the torturing sickness went away, and Mrs. Turner lay composed, but very weak. She motioned for Jessie to lean over, and whispered—

"God is your friend; go to Him with all your cares; trust Him in every emergency. Be a good sister to Percy always; be father and mother to him; teach him the way."

Jessie tried to restrain the rushing tears, but they blinded her. When she wiped them away, and could once more distinguish those dear features, she saw that a smile was upon them; the lips were moving, and she inclined her ear to listen.

"Come unto me, all ye that are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest." Rest!" she repeated softly. "My child, kiss me, and go and try to sleep; I am so much better now." Jessie clung to her hand, and was loth to go. "It will please me; I do not need you now, and you have been such a darling nurse. Good-night!"

Mrs. Goodall and Dr. G——'s wife were in the room, and the exhausted girl, who had not slept for nearly a week, crept upon a lounge which stood opposite the bed. She could see, from where she lay, that her mother appeared to be sleeping. Now that the necessity for constant exertion was gone, her overtaken faculties resisted no longer, and she was soon in a deep slumber.

"Poor child!" whispered Mrs. Goodall, "how pale and thin she has grown! Just look at her, Mrs. G——; I believe she will be sick, too."

"I wish that I had such a daughter," replied the lady addressed, who had two sons, but no daughter, in her household. "So good, so devoted, so beautiful!"

There were other eyes than theirs regarding that pale and exquisite face. Mrs. Turner lay in such a position that her glance rested easily upon the sleeper; and oh, the unutterable love, prayer, and blessing in those dying eyes, as they moved not from her daughter's countenance! It might have been an hour that she remained thus motionless; the two watchers supposed her to be in an easy slumber, for the dark lashes were nearly closed upon the white cheeks; then they heard her murmur, quite distinctly, "Father, I give her to Thee!" and, with a slight upthrowing of her hands, she fell asleep—in death.

The two ladies looked at each other and at the unconscious girl. "Let us not awaken her; it will do no good now," said Mrs. G——.

Her suggestion was attended to, and Jessie slept all night, the deep slumber of exhaustion, while the soft tramping of careful feet and the tones of low conversation went on about her.

Just as the sun wheeled up from the horizon, Jessie sprang to her feet, fully awakened by his beams. The window was open; an apple-tree waved its dewy blossoms before her eyes, and a bird was singing on the very window-sill. At this moment, the attendants were all out of the room. Saying to herself, "My mother!" she turned towards the bed. Her step was arrested, for she saw the still outline of a form beneath a snowy sheet; she saw two hands crossed, patiently and helplessly, upon a rigid bosom, and a face with closed eyes and breathless lips.

When Mrs. G—— came in, a few moments later, she found the young girl lying upon the bed, with her face hidden in the bosom of the dead. She thought that perhaps she had fainted; but when she undertook to remove her, a cry so sorrowful, so heart-broken, burst from the mourner that she could only sit down and weep in sympathy. By and by, she gently loosened the arms of the living from their clasp upon the dead, and, drawing Jessie's head upon her own kind breast, she smoothed her hair, and talked to her, in a low voice, of resignation and that better world to which her beloved parent had gone.

Not one word did the stricken orphan hear of all that had been said, but remained tearless and silent where she was placed, until a neighbor came in, leading her little brother by the hand. She heard his sob of grief and affright, and felt the clinging of his arms about her neck, and answered him by an embrace and a burst of tears. She sank down upon the floor, and, taking him in her arms, the two children wept together for a long time. When the well-meaning Mrs. Goodall would have separated them, Mrs. G—— drew her away.

"She will make herself sick with crying."

"She will be more seriously ill, Mrs. Goodall, if she does *not* cry; it is much better so."

When they had grown more composed, the sister led the boy to look upon their mother.

"Will they put my mamma into the ugly ground, and make her stay alone there all night?" asked Percy, shuddering.

"They will put her body there, darling, but her spirit has gone to heaven, and become one

of those beautiful angels of which she loved to tell us—a beautiful, beautiful angel!"

The boy looked up through the window to the clear blue sky, with wondering and loving eyes. "I suppose she will look out of the sky, some day, and speak to me."

"I do not know whether you will ever see her face," replied the sister, "but you will hear her often, if you listen, speaking to your heart, and bidding you be a good child; and some time you will go to her, though not for a great many years, perhaps."

Here Jessie, who, in trying to comfort the little one, had comforted herself, again broke down with grief, and cast herself beside her mother; clinging to those cold hands whose tender pressure nevermore would thrill her aching heart, she would not be removed. Percy, after a time, was quieted and persuaded to eat his breakfast. As far as he comprehended the calamity which had befallen him, he was deeply affected. As soon as he could get away from those who were forcing upon his appetite those dainties which he did not desire, he stole back to the little bed-room, and, sitting in his chair beside the bed, clung to his sister's garments in a kind of amazed sorrow. Acquaintances began to come softly in—friends—that is, friendly people, for Jessie had no *friend* now.

The ceremonies and proprieties of life must be preserved. Clara Goodall and others busied themselves in preparing suitable apparel for the orphans. Jessie stood up, half fainting, and certainly unconscious of what she was standing there for, to be fitted with a black gown; then Clara replaced her in an arm-chair, brushed out and arranged her hair for her, and tried to persuade her to partake of food. It was Mrs. G—— who at last induced her to eat. "You *must* eat," she said; but how softly she spoke the imperative "must!" "You have taken nothing for a great many hours. You do not wish to make yourself ill, for your brother's sake; try to be brave for his sake, for you are all the one he has now to comfort him."

The poor child did look at him, and remembered her mother's charge. She drank a cup of tea with an effort, and then flew back, like a birdling frightened from its nest, to her place by the couch.

The long, dark, wretched day drew to a close. She could not have told whether it had been a day or a year. The shroud and the coffin were there; and there was a consultation as to what to do with the girl whose shining curls were

still streaming over the bosom of her lost mother, to induce her to repose.

"I never saw a person take a death harder," said a neighbor, in a pitying tone.

"She is stricken to the heart; there is no doubt about that," replied Mrs. G——, who had returned in the evening, to ascertain if there was not some kind office still to be performed. She had removed Percy, who had fallen asleep with the tears half dried on his chubby cheeks, to his cot; and she now proposed to give a composing draught to Jessie, which should enable her to sleep through the night. Again the softly imperative "must" was upon her lips, as she led the young girl to her chamber, and with her own hands unfastened her dress, and helped her upon the bed. "Now, Jessie," she said, "let us pray."

Kneeling by the couch, and clasping one of the orphan's hands in her own, she offered up a low prayer, the touching Christian fervor of which stole even upon the stunned mind of the mourner, and calmed the whirl of her thoughts. Before she ceased, her earthly listener was soothed almost into slumber; and when this lovely woman left her good-night kiss upon her forehead, she dreamed that it was her mother's, and smiled and slept.

Despite the slight opiate which she had taken, Jessie awoke about three o'clock. She lay some time without remembering what was the matter with her; it seemed as if the night, the black night, was pressing down upon her breast and keeping her heart from beating. Like the dash of a cold sea drenching a helpless shore, the memory of her loss broke over her. She groaned, and turned upon her couch. There was no rest there, and, after lying a short time, she arose, slipped on her dressing-gown, and stole to her mother's room. A single taper burned gloomily on a stand; the watchers were in an adjoining apartment, and the orphan heard them conversing pleasantly; one of them laughed a little, but checked herself, and sighed afterwards. They were young people; the loss was not theirs, and they could not be sad all night, even out of sympathy. "I am the one to watch with you, my mother," whispered Jessie, kneeling by the bed, and removing the wet cloth which covered the face. "O my mother, my mother!"

The watchers heard her moan, and started as if they had seen a ghost. Clara Goodall turned quite pale, and begged her brother to go in and see what it was. He slipped lightly inside the door, and saw the spirit-like form of the living kneeling by the dead, her bright

hair floating like wings upon her shoulders, her eyes fixed immovably upon the features before her. He gazed for several moments before he returned to tell them that it was Jessie; then he went in again, and knelt beside her, saying—

"Dear, dear Jessie, if I could comfort you!"

"There is no comfort," she said, abruptly; but, looking at him, and seeing the tears flowing down his cheeks, her chilled heart was touched with gratitude, and she said, more gently, "At least, not now. Leave me to my mourning now."

He arose and went out, and she kept watch until day.

The funeral was at ten o'clock. Jessie tried to repress her feelings, for she was afraid that she should lose her senses. She clasped Percy's hand tight, and led him out, where they were lifted into Mrs. G——'s carriage, who sat with them. Nearly all the neighborhood were in attendance, but she took no note of it. When she left the carriage and stood by the grave, her attempts to keep her mind firm and clear were in vain; overwhelmed with rushing darkness, she heard not the words of the minister or the chanting of the choir; she was conscious of nothing until the dreary sound of the earth rattling upon the coffin struck like a knife to her heart. She sank back into the arms of some one behind her, and thought herself dying; but the pang passed away, while, like one who hears sweet music in a dream, she heard clearly and distinctly the clergyman's voice—"I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write, from henceforth, blessed are the dead who die in the Lord; even so saith the spirit, for they rest from their labors."

"They rest from their labors!" Hearing no more, her thoughts flew back, like lightning illuminating the past, and she understood, as with all her affection she had never done before, the peculiar excellencies and trials of that dear mother who, with a great and beautiful soul, had led a life unsatisfied upon earth, bearing her cross nobly, ever yearning for higher perfection. She thought of how heavy and vexing to bear had been her burdens, and suddenly she saw her, plainly as if she stood before her face, smiling upon her with eyes of love, having features of beauty and a glory upon her forehead, robed in garments of grace, beckoning towards the sky with spotless hands.

The people thought Jessie had fainted, but, as they bore her back to the carriage, she opened her eyes with a smile. "It is well with my mother," she said to Mrs. G——, and, leaning

back on the cushion, shed gentle and soothing tears.

Arrived at Mrs. G——'s—forthere the orphans were taken for the present—she yielded to the attentions of those around her with a kind of grateful resignation. The wild regret which she had felt at bidding farewell to that adored form, the fierce reluctance to consigning it to the grave, had passed away; in its stead was the memory of that consoling vision. She had a chance now to think of her own poverty and desolation. "What shall we do, Percy? We are orphans, and have no home!" The child could not answer his sister's question; his face was turned to hers, as he rested his head upon her knee; but, in his tearful eyes, burning with childish grief, she could read no worldly speculations, no solution of that difficult problem, "What are we to do?"

CHAPTER IV.

THE late Mrs. Turner had some relatives, of her husband's side of the family, residing in New York—a sister, married to a Dr. Stanton, and their children, a son and three daughters. Jessie had been acquainted with them all when a little girl; they had been often to visit at her home, but after her father's failure and consequent dissipation the intercourse had decreased until all acquaintanceship had ceased between the two families.

As, of late years, her mother had mentioned them only with proud pity of their selfishness, Jessie did not write to them, but had a paper containing a notice of the death forwarded to them a few days after the funeral. When this paper was received, a sense of her unsisterly conduct smote the worldly heart of Mrs. Stanton, and, in a moment of regret, she resolved to do something for the eldest of the orphans, whom she remembered as a delicate, ladylike child. She resolved to invite her to spend a year in her family, and to send her the means of coming. This was a great sacrifice for her, as she had three daughters of her own, and was extremely fashionable and only moderately wealthy, having nothing to spare from her allowance for others.

Dr. Stanton very warmly coincided with his wife in her resolutions. He was a man of generous feeling, very stately, very formal, but really very kind. The past neglect had hardly been his, for it had been at the suggestion of his wife that their summer excursions were always to some watering-place, and never west

to visit the Turners. Her excuse, that she would be too trying to her nerves to meet her brother in his fallen condition, was accepted by him as the *bona fide* reason of her reluctance. The other members of the family were variously affected at hearing the proposal to have their cousin visit them. Thomas, the Stanton junior, declared that he should like to promenade Fifth Avenue with his country cousin by his side, if she was anything like as pretty as she used to be, especially if she had "just *gaucherie* enough to plague Miriam to death;" however, as he should have to go back to college in September, he supposed he should hardly get to taking cousinly liberties before he would have to be off. Miss Stanton, who resembled her mother, and was selfish and elegant without being very handsome, thought with disdain of the proposition, and silently declared herself unwilling to forego any of her own privileges on the cousin's account. Julie, an excellent, warm-hearted girl of fifteen, was delighted with the idea of a friend not two years older than herself; while Minnie, who was but eight, thought anybody brother Tom wanted to see would be delightful. The letter was written and dispatched.

Mrs. G—— had insisted upon Jessie and her brother remaining with her a few weeks, so that when the letter reached its destination they were still at her house. Of course, it was at once shown to Mrs. G——, and her judgment solicited upon a decision. Jessie was very reluctant to accept the offer, because of the past conduct of her aunt. On the other hand, she knew not what to turn to where she was; and yet again, the letter contained no mention of Percy, and she could not desert him.

"I advise you to go, by all means," said her friend; "the change of scene and air, the interest of new associations will do more to restore your courage and failing health than anything else."

"But Percy?" questioned Jessie.

"It is partly for his sake that you must make up your mind to go. If you ruin your health by grief, he will have no one to look to; besides, you have confided to me your hopes of some time gaining or helping along a living by literary exertion; you can command friends and influences in a great city that will perhaps enable you to realize some of your plans. During the time that you remain in your aunt's house, you can be assiduously improving your time, cultivating your taste, and perhaps secure such friends and engagements as will make your wishes feasible. In that time, I

will take care of your brother here. He is not much trouble, and I am very fond of him. My boys are so much older that he will be quite a pet."

Jessie was so overcome by the generosity of this proposal that she could only express her thanks by smiles and tears. She tried to stammer forth suitable gratitude, but her words were hushed by the good lady.

"Do not say nay to it, child; I offer it because I am interested in both of you, and wish you to have a fair chance to begin life. Do you not think you had better go?"

"My aunt was not kind to my mother," sighed Jessie.

"Then you must freely forgive her, in the true Christian spirit, and accept this token of her remorse in a friendly manner. You cannot afford to cherish resentment against any who would be your friends, for you need friendship. If you love others, they will love you; and if anything will raise you up a host of well-wishers, it will be your own darling, affectionate heart. You have warm affections enough to compel half the world to love you."

"If I thought God approved of my acts, I should not feel deserted wherever I might go," said the young girl, timidly.

"Dear child, I think you will be one of His favored children. He chasteneth whom He loves, but only for their good. Those little hands may become brown with toil, but they will some time be pure and white in heaven. You have but to have faith, and all will be well."

The very afternoon upon which she had decided to go east, Clara and James Goodall called to ask Jessie to walk with them. There was a charming grove, with a bit of rock, and a small cascade and brook, which was much resorted to by the young people, and hither the three wended their way. It was about a quarter of a mile from the Four Corners. When they had reached the place and found a seat upon a moss-grown boulder which faced the noisy cascade, Clara, most innocently, was diverted away in search of wild violets, and her brother was left alone with Jessie.

Although she had never had "an offer," and was unskilled in every coquettish wile, her heart began to forebode what was coming, and she was fain to make an excuse to follow Clara, when, suddenly seizing her hand to detain her, James Goodall said:—

"I must speak to you a moment, dear Jessie. Believe me, hard as it is to repress my own selfish feelings, I would not intrude upon you

in these first days of your mourning, were it not that I know you have no home, and I want to offer you one. I want to make you happy. If you will be my wife, you shall want for nothing that I can procure for you; and your little brother shall share with us, and become as dear to me as he is to you."

Poor Jessie did not know how to reply; she was troubled, and just spoke the simple truth, without studying her answer. "You are very kind, Mr. Goodall; but how can I promise to be your wife when I do not love you? Oh, I am too young to think of love or marriage; but I am much obliged to you, indeed I am, for your kind intentions."

A more worldly young lady may smile at Jessie's refusal, may be able to dismiss a lover more gracefully; but she had not contemplated her part, not enacted in fancy hitherto.

"But will you not *learn* to love me, Jessie?"

His face was pale, and she knew by the depth of his voice that he was greatly moved. She sincerely wished that she could answer him "Yes;" but when she tried to feel it, and to school herself to it, she only felt the more the want of that spiritual element in his character which she knew that she needed to make her happy, yet could not define. A vision of a dark-eyed stranger, upon whose intellectual forehead sat the visible signet of the soul which her own responded to, rose up before her; and, though she had no thought of ever again meeting that person, or being mated with one who resembled him, yet the contrast made the young man by her side unsatisfactory. So, gathering up more firmness than she usually displayed, she answered him in a low voice—

"I am grateful, James, but I cannot promise to be your wife. It was very good of you to think of my needing a home, but I have received a letter to-day from my aunt in New York, who offers me a home in her family for a year, and, by Mrs. G——'s advice, I have concluded to accept it; I shall go very soon. I am only a child now in experience; a year from now, I shall know myself and the world better."

"Ah," sighed the young man, "I do indeed resign all hope of you now! If you are going to a city, to receive the attentions of the accomplished and brilliant, I may as well give up. Well, since you will not have me, I wish you much good fortune, and am glad you have such prospects."

"I shall never forget your goodness," responded the young girl, in a trembling tone, pained by the despondency of his accents. "I

do not expect to be loved or flattered where I am going; I hope only to put myself in the way of being useful. There comes Clara; let us meet her."

They walked along, trying to dispel from their faces the secret of their conversation. Clara was going to be very gay and to rally them, but something in her brother's face surprised and silenced her. On their way home, Jessie told her her plan of going to New York, and she said that she should have been very glad to hear it, if she had not rather have kept her till September, to be bridesmaid when she was married. "James is to be groomsman, and I'm sure I don't know whom he will find that he will consent to stand with in your place," she concluded, half laughingly.

Percy was the hardest one to convince of the expediency of the step about to be taken. Several times Jessie hesitated about leaving him, he seemed so forlorn at the thought; but one day he gave his consent, and never made any further objection. The secret of his yielding lay in a confidential talk which his friend James Goodall had with him, during which he was told that, if he did not wish his sister to die and be buried like his mother, he must let her go away where she would get quite well. He only stipulated that she should come back in time to help him make a snow-house in the winter.

Jessie's scanty wardrobe gave her some trouble. The sale of their little parcel of household furniture had provided her with a handsome black dress and shawl; the rest of the sum raised in that way had gone to make Percy comfortable for the season. Mrs. G—— had once been in mourning, and she had several articles that were yet good, which she contributed. A number of neat, plain collars and cuffs were made up at a trifling expense by Jessie's tasteful fingers, and she then found that there was an overplus of the means her aunt sent her sufficient to warrant her in purchasing a travelling-dress and bonnet. At last she was all ready for the—to her—eventful journey. Her farewell visit to her mother's grave cheered as much as sorrowed her, for she knelt beside it, and turned her pure face to heaven for the love and blessing of Heaven. She clung to her little brother, when the hour came for parting, and he cried lustily; but the carriage awaited her which was to convey her to the nearest railroad station, and she must not delay. While thus absorbed with Percy, she had left her purse and handkerchief upon the table. Clara and James had come over to bid

her good-by; the latter now handed her these, which she was nearly forgetting.

Mrs. G—— went with her the six miles to the station, where she placed her in the care of friends who were going in the same direction. She found these friends true to their appointment, and very willing to take charge of the young orphan so warmly recommended to their kindness. It was pleasant weather, early in June. The locomotive screamed, the train came rushing in, and, with a beating heart and brimming eyes, Jessie parted from Mrs. G——.

She was glad that the noise of the cars interrupted any conversation attempted by her new acquaintances, for she felt more like nestling in a corner and dreaming over the future than like talking. The last glimpse she had had of Percy was of his golden curls streaming over the window-sill at an upper casement, where he had gone to look after the carriage which bore away his sister.

It was not until she came to pay her hotel-bill at the City of L——, where they took a boat, that Jessie discovered four gold eagles in her purse which had not been there when she laid it down at her friend's. "It must have been James Goodall who did this thing. How good he is!" she murmured. She was sorry he had done it, but she could not help it; and he doubtless knew that a little pocket-money of her own would not come amiss when she found herself amid her city relatives.

(Conclusion next month.)

DESTINY; OR, THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF A LOWELL OPERATIVE.

BY BURNER BROWNER.

CHAPTER I.

My mother was only a poor boarding-house keeper, in the manufacturing city of L—, and there were seven of us to be provided for. We were once well off and respected in the country, and it was a hard, bitter thing for my mother to be thrown upon the world with seven children to provide for. I was the oldest, and only twelve years of age, when we went to L—, and my mother took a house upon the W. Corporation, and soon had thirty men boarders. The very small sum—two dollars per week—which they paid for their board (the price was regulated by the Company) would not allow of her keeping any one to assist her; she desired to save every cent to spend upon us, and she economized in every possible way, that we might never miss the luxuries to which we had been accustomed. My mother was a very proud woman, and she was very anxious that her children (for we were all girls) should be well educated, should marry well, and be saved from the drudgery that was slowly sapping her life away.

The coarse, vulgar men that sat at her table we were never allowed to associate with; for she would be up before light to prepare their breakfast, and when they were gone she would rouse us, and some delicacies would be laid upon the snowy cloth which was always kept for us. The beautiful china which she had saved from the wreck, the nice silver, and fine napkins, were always laid upon our table, and our mother, in her fresh cap, would sit with us. She wished us never to forget our old ways, and to remember that we must all be ladies, and she judged rightly that we could not be, unless carefully trained.

We were elegantly dressed, and sent to the best schools, where we met children of wealthy parents, who, at first, looked upon us with scorn; but, when they found our manners were gentle, and that we were always in good standing in our classes, gradually came to treat us better, although, I think, they never forgot that we were only the daughters of a Corporation boarding-house keeper. I know that God makes no distinction, and that, after all, it does not matter so much *where* we live as *how*; and yet

I think never a moment of my life was I free from the feeling of disgrace I felt it to be to live upon the Corporation.

I was called very beautiful, and I know my mother's heart was bound up in me; and it is a consolation to me now that I was never unkind to my mother, but that my great affection for her was a comfort, many and many a time, when she was near sinking.

We were never allowed to assist in the drudgery of the house, and, up stairs, we had a parlor that was as handsome as any in the city. We had a piano, and harp, and plenty of books, and my mother encouraged us to sew upon delicate work, to embroider, to paint, and draw; and, after her work was done, at night, she would come up and listen to our songs, and talk about books with us, for she had a good education, and was fond of literature. She had no time to do anything but drudge, but she never complained, and I know she was happy in her children. Never but one of us gave her any pain, and that was the youngest, who was a very wild, careless child, and who seemed to be perfectly reckless, at times. She would run away, when sent to school, and spend whole hours playing with the dirty children in the street, and would, likely as not, return at night without shoes or stockings, and with her clothes in tatters. One night, at dark, we missed her, and, pitying my mother's distress, I went out myself to search for the wanderer.

Upon a large common, in the upper part of the city, a circus company was encamped, and, as I approached the place, the crowd, the shouts, and the music alarmed me so much that I wished myself back at home; but something within said: "You'll surely find Louise there;" so I pushed along to the door. My veil was tightly drawn over my face, but a rough arm pulled me back, and a harsh voice cried, "Unveil, miss!" I felt my bonnet rudely seized, and, as it fell to the ground, a coarse shout was raised, and a laugh rang in my ears. "Aha! that's the dainty daughter of the boarding-house keeper on the W. Corporation; the proud minx that lets her old mother drudge while she employs her dainty fingers upon finery!"

I was rudely jostled, vulgar jokes were bandied

about, and, in my distress, I burst into a fit of violent weeping. A gentleman, passing by and seeing my situation, rescued me. I told him *why* I was there, and he drew my arm within his own, and accompanied me within the tent. When I looked at him in the glare of the lights, I saw that my companion was the son of the agent of our Company, and I knew I was safe, for I had often heard of him as a gentleman, although a very proud and haughty one. But he showed none of that to me, not even when I told him who I was, but treated me deferentially as though I had been a princess born. I was seventeen then, and had never associated with gentlemen, and the charm of his handsome presence was very great to me. His dark eyes glowed as they met mine, and the fascinating polish of his manner I could not withstand.

By and by, I began to think of what brought me there, and, after a while, on the very front seat, close upon the stage, I saw my little sister, with her dress soiled, her bonnet in her hand, and her long, dark hair, half uncurled, hanging down upon her fair, uncovered shoulders. She was evidently absorbed in the performances, and as I pointed her out, and would fain have gone for her at once, my companion drew me back, saying: "It is a pity to disturb her; let her enjoy it until it is over, and I will take you home." So I forgot all about my mother's anxiety, and sat down by his side with a thrill of pleasure, and a trembling pulsation at my heart. Mr. Fergus paid no attention to the performances, but kept talking to me about his travels, and about books, and things with which I was familiar, but which I never before had heard talked of out of our family circle. I was pleased that he treated me with so much respect, but I noticed that many of those about us looked suspiciously at me. The company was composed of operatives; and very near us were several of my mother's boarders, who exchanged sly winks and nods with each other. I felt the hot blood rush to my cheeks, and wondered *why* Mr. Fergus's kindness should cause such actions, for I didn't know then that there was anything singular in a gentleman's kindness to a poor girl.

When the performances were over, Mr. Fergus very kindly brought my sister to me, helped me to arrange her dress, and, taking her by the hand, brought us safely to my mother's door. I asked him to come in, that my mother might thank him; but he declined, and said he would "do himself the pleasure of calling some other time." But I told him that my mother never

allowed a gentleman to call upon us without her permission, and only in her presence. He looked surprised, smiled, and bade me "Good-night."

Not a moment of content was mine after that night. The hard realities of life rose up before me, and I saw the gulf that seemed impassable between Mr. Fergus and myself. Beneath my calm, and rather cold, exterior was an undercurrent of fire, volcano-like, but smouldering; and, for the first time, I seemed to feel how far above my humble lot were my aspirations and my hopes. I found no peace, even in our little parlor.

My mother, although grateful to Mr. Fergus, for she had written to tell him so, had declined his offer of an acquaintance, and had told him plainly that she did not wish him to renew his intercourse with her daughter. She was prouder than I thought, that hard-worked mother of mine. Mr. Fergus had supposed she would be delighted at his condescension; but she knew his calls at our house would never be tolerated by his parents, who were proud and arrogant, although Mrs. Fergus's father was a laboring man in the very town where my grandparents had been wealthy farmers.

I became listless and unhappy, and had no pleasure in anything, and half the pleasure of our home was gone, for I had always been a sort of teacher for my younger sisters, and had endeavored to fill my mother's place when she was working below stairs; but now I had no pleasure in anything, and I think my mother was also greatly troubled, although she never said anything to me.

CHAPTER II.

Time passed on, and I never saw Mr. Fergus after that night, until my sister next me was married. I was then in my nineteenth year, but I had never had a lover. My sister Caroline was about to be married to a young merchant in the neighboring city of B—, and the next youngest, only sixteen, was engaged to a young clergyman; but, although others thought it strange that, with my great beauty, I should still remain single, I think my mother was well pleased, for she always, in her caressing way, called me a "queen," and I know she hoped I should make a splendid match.

I was my sister's bridesmaid, and accompanied her on her wedding tour to Saratoga, and so on to Niagara, and home through New York. I had never been out into the world,

and I knew nothing of gay society, only from books, but I had always yearned for an elegant life such as I read of, free from coarse sights and sounds, and at Saratoga the yearning became an unutterable longing. My sister had not much deep feeling, and never could understand half of what she called my "fancies." She thought her husband perfect, and enjoyed herself in the present, while I, who had made Mr. Fergus my *beau-ideal* of a gentleman, only looked upon my brother-in-law as a gay, generous, good-natured man, without much mind or intellect.

I watched carefully all whom I met, and I saw none superior to Mr. Fergus, but I longed to enter the gay world upon equal terms with those whom I saw. I knew that I was superior in beauty to many whom I met, and I saw that I attracted a great deal of attention, and I felt that Mr. Fergus even, if he saw me away from my coarse surroundings, might love me.

My sister chid me often for my reserve, for we were six weeks at Saratoga, and many gentlemen asked my brother-in-law for an introduction to his "superb sister," as they called me; but I was not born a flirt, and I could never chatter *nothings* by the hour together, so I was called scornful, haughty, and proud; and my sensitive nature was stung dreadfully, one night, by overhearing my *vis-à-vis* in the dance say to her partner, "She's only a factory boarding-house keeper's daughter, and see what airs she gives herself!"

After this, I felt *marked* at Saratoga, although my sister said, when I besought her to leave, that "we were better than half we met. There are the rich Misses C—, from New York—why, their grandmother actually sold vegetables in market for twenty years, and, notwithstanding, they are the leaders of fashion."

"Yes," I replied, "but they are *rich*, and so were their parents before them, while our mother is poor, and works to give us luxuries. Oh that we had never been educated above our station!"

I never went into the drawing-room again while we stayed, but a rich elderly gentleman made me an offer of his hand, and declared it would be the proudest day of his life, if he could ever call me wife. He was a man mighty upon 'Change, and well known in State Street; and my sister and her husband urged me to accept him, but I could not. He offered to settle a hundred thousand dollars upon me, and I knew that the factory boarding-house keeper's daughter could, if she pleased, become the *fashion* even at Saratoga; for who

refuses those stamped as golden coin? Do they not always pass current?

When we arrived at Niagara, I was enchanted. Many had told me that they were disappointed—that it was not half so grand as they imagined; but Nature unadorned, unaided by Art, here first spoke out to my soul, and I responded. The Grand Rapids awed me as much as the Fall itself; but my favorite place was upon Goat Island, where I would sit for hours, just upon the verge of the bank, as it slopes down to the rushing waters, as they pour the precipice and dash madly upon the rocks below. I used to sit there under the shade of the trees—which were turning to crimson and gold, for it was now the last of September—and listen to the mighty roar, the quivering, trembling shivers of the myriad waters, and long to sway myself over into the stream, and be swept out of time into eternity. While my sister and her husband, preceded by a guide, made the grand tour, I wandered about alone, but always, as each day closed, I sat a short time in my favorite place.

I had not been there a week before I felt that Mr. Fergus must be there. Laugh at me, call it superstition, whatever you like, I felt that I was within a singular influence; and one day, as I sat musing alone, and tossing dead leaves into the current, and watching the little eddying circles round which they swept, before being fatally engulfed, I knew instantly that he was approaching, and that he was waiting for me to look up; but I had no power to raise my head. I was afraid he would suspect that I cared for him—that he would see, by the flush that mounted even to my brow, that I knew of his approach, and had perhaps been waiting for him. "Miss Favor," at length he said, "I am happy to meet you again"—and he sat down upon the grass not far from me, and we talked and laughed as though we had known each other a lifetime, for I had great self-control, and after the first moment I crushed down all my tremulous feelings, and double-locked them in my heart. He did not speak or laugh loud, but with a gentle, murmuring sound that was in unison with my feelings, and seemed subdued in awe of the place and scene. I had never seen any one who so nearly approached my ideal of masculine perfection. In short, he seemed crowned with all manly graces, natural and acquired.

I never in my life had anything to touch my feelings so as his manner, full of deference and respect, and I saw in the admiring gaze which he cast upon me that I pleased even his prac-

tised eye and fastidious tastes. I think this feeling gave me ease and self-possession, and he drew out my powers so that I forgot—I never had before—that I was a factory boarding-house keeper's daughter.

For days, we were constantly together, and I tried at times, but faintly, to resist his captivating power, but I could not. It was a bright October morning; the dew-drops sparkled in a thousand gorgeous colors upon the brilliant foliage; and, standing in my favorite place, I heard his vows of love, and felt supremely blessed.

Carl Fergus accompanied us home, and, entering our house for the first time, asked my mother's consent to our engagement. I believe she would have had it otherwise, for she knew I could never be welcome in his family; but she had watched me closely, and had suspected all along that the change which had come over me was all through my meeting him the evening of my search for my little sister. And maybe, I have often thought so, that my mother, with her great partiality for me, might have thought it impossible any one could long resist my influence. However that may be, my mother gave her consent, and I soon saw that she was very much attached to him, and looked forward to the evenings which brought him to our house with a great deal of pleasure. He was always gentlemanly and polite to the rough men whom he often met in the passages, as he was coming up to our parlor; and many a time he would go down to search for my mother, and, taking her hand, now hard, bony, and seamed with the rough work she did, lead her up stairs, and place her in an easy-chair, while he read to her some of his favorite passages. Such gentleness and consideration quite won her heart, for, in the many long years that she had labored, he was the first one, out of her own family, who had ever treated her as other than a good-hearted drudge. Even my sister's husband had not thought it worth his while to pay her much attention, but had contented himself with making her a handsome present occasionally. How I gloried in the thought that my husband—how sweet were those words, "my husband!" how I toyed with them, and whispered them lingeringly, tenderly to myself!—knew how to appreciate my poor slave mother, for a slave she had been for many a long year. She was a handsome woman even then, although care and anxiety had left their footprints upon her countenance. She had never forgotten that she was once a lady, and for her children's sake she always,

even in her kitchen, was careful of her personal appearance.

Just about this time, my sister Eleanor, she who was engaged to the clergyman, was married, and went away, taking with her my youngest sister Louise, who still continued as wild and careless as ever. My sister in B— had taken one with her, so that now there were only three of us at home.

Weeks and months passed along; they seemed little more than a long summer day, for Carl Fergus was my constant companion. I believed that *apart* earth held no happiness for either of us. I thought how bright I would make Carl's home, how I would win even his parents to love me. I loved with all the silent, restless might of my reserved, proud nature. Carl never spoke of his parents, but I thought, indeed I felt, that they did not sanction our acquaintance.

One day, a carriage drove to our door, and a liveried footman handed in a card—"Mrs. Fergus, for Miss Rosa Favor." She was waiting in the passage below, just as the factory-bell was ringing, and the crowd of coarse men were pushing past her, in haste to get their noonday meal. Oh, what a throb of hatred I felt towards her, that she should choose *such* a time for her call—that she should, with apparently such systematic cruelty, make the distance between us greater, even, than it really was! When I received her, and saw her start of surprise, as she glanced at the room, then at myself, I think she was for a moment irresolute. I know she felt, for I saw it in her eyes, "This girl does justice to my son's taste." She had expected to meet a coarse, blowsy country beauty, rough and unpolished, and she hesitated to speak, for I saw that she had come upon no pleasant errand.

"My son," she said, at length, "has been the object of my life, the object to whom all my thoughts have been devoted. He has repaid my affection with neglect, my confidence with deception. His love for you can never be more than a *fancy*, for he can never so far demean himself as to marry a woman of your vulgar connections."

Such a concentration of scorn and contempt as darkened her face and flashed in her eyes I could not have thought possible. Her voice, though low, was vehement, and her passion made itself felt in her whole figure.

"You condemn us unheard, Mrs. Fergus. My connections are not vulgar. My family were once rich and respectable, in the very town where your father worked as a day-laborer,

ranking with the men whom you met going to my mother's table."

An angry flush overspread her features, and she said, in an intolerant manner: "You have forced my son into an acquaintance, your arts and beauty have dazzled him; but nothing is more certain than that your marriage can never take place. What is your love to mine? What can you have in common with him? Should you marry, after his weak passion is gratified, he will toss you off as carelessly as he would a broken toy; your charm will be gone. What to him can be a mere pretty face? Can you sympathize with his pursuits, cheer him by your conversation, or amuse his idle hours? I see," she said, glancing around, "that he is trying to polish you, to educate you for his sphere, but it will never do; you have lived too many years in this house, in contact with coarseness and vulgarity, ever to be lifted above it."

"Madam," I commenced, trembling with passion, for I felt how infinitely above her vulgar pretensions we were; but she waved her hand to silence me, and said—

"My son is to choose between you and his mother. He must annul his engagement, or never more look for his mother's love. This is my *right*—I will have it so." With a stately courtesy, she turned, and, lifting her rustling silken garments, descended the stairs; and I heard the clash of the door as it closed after her, and the grating of the carriage-wheels as she drove away.

Let no one be shocked by this, and think that Mrs. Fergus was a whit more hard-hearted than others of her class. People harden as they get old; the frost of time steals on and nips their sympathies, and they forget that they have ever loved.

My mother came up very soon, and found me on the floor, in a fit of weeping, and almost inconsolable.

"Rosa, my child, what is the matter?"

I hid my face, and pushed her from me. What was life, what was my mother's love to me now, in my great sorrow! I had no philosophy that made me equal to this emergency; my pride was angry and defiant, and I asked no pity even from my mother, and—God forgive me!—I almost cursed her, that she had not died rather than become a factory boarding-house keeper, but I did not tell her so. I told her of Mrs. Fergus's visit, and of all she said to me.

There had always been something very touching to me in my mother's quiet and self-contained life. She had never spoken regretfully

of the past—never for a moment forgot her daily duties, to dally with brighter, happier reminiscences; such as her fate had been, she had accepted it, and labored faithfully. She had always been reserved about the past, even to her children; and shut up in that quiet heart of hers, I know, there were many things that troubled the current of her life. Now, she took me in her arms, and called me her "baby;" she smoothed my hair and caressed my cheek, and, laying my head upon her shoulder, she told me of her life. She told me of my father, a stately man, who had been a judge, and who won her heart when she was only sixteen. There was no reproach coupled with his name, when she told me of his sinking deeper and deeper in his cups, until property, business, *all* went from him—until his reason, too, was gone, and he was laid in his grave. And there was a glorious look of self-abnegation about her, as she told me of her weary struggles, of the battle with the pride that lingered in her heart, of the long nights of anguish she passed, and of the sorrow she felt that her children should be wounded as she had been. She said I had been nearer and dearer to her than all the others, for she knew I had an underlying current of emotions so like her own, was so like her in my pride, that she feared I must suffer bitter sorrow. She saw that I had been wounded daily, that I lived as though under a ban. "But you seemed," she said, "to me so charming in beauty, in grace, and accomplishments, that I felt, when your worth was known, you would be appreciated, and that you could never be happy with the men your sisters had married. Mrs. Fergus is angry, for she wishes her son to augment his wealth and add to his position by a marriage with the wealthy Mrs. W—. But Carl Fergus is not dependent upon his parents; his profession is even now lucrative; and, if his heart is what I think it is, he loves you too well to disdain you because your mother is poor. If he does not, he is not worthy of you."

She understood me. She had never seemed to me so good as then; the tears stood in her eyes, and her voice was low and gentle.

"My mother," I said, with a reproach at my heart; "I am not worthy of you. I will strive to overcome and be like you; only be patient with me."

That evening, Carl came not; and the next evening, with a rising fear at my heart, I watched for him. My pride was humbled, and alone I wrestled with a great and o'ermastering agony.

On the third day, Carl came to us. There was a shadow upon his brow, but otherwise he was the same as ever. I believe, in my great love for him, I had allowed him to see more of my heart than most women show previous to marriage. I was not ashamed of my feelings, and it was the one only delight of my life. He was my god, and he knew it. The reverent humility with which I approached him was wonderful, even to myself.

CHAPTER III.

Mrs. W—— was the daughter of a lawyer, and very wealthy. She was very handsome, with an extreme softness of manner, and a gentle pliancy of touch and expression, that always reminded me of a cat. She had been a schoolmate of mine, but we had never been intimate; and her father's position in town raised her so much above myself that I had only a slight speaking acquaintance with her. She was married very young, and in three weeks was left a widow and mistress of two hundred thousand dollars. She enjoyed her freedom and independence, and was a proficient in the art of flirtation.

Not until long afterwards did I know that Mrs. Fergus paid her a visit the same day that she called on me. With a woman's intuitive perception, she had discovered that Mrs. W—— would not object to change her name to that of Mrs. Carl Fergus, and she at once launched upon the subject of love and marriage. She spoke of my family as a vulgar set, and said that, as her son had once been of some service to the eldest daughter, she had so far presumed upon this as to commence an acquaintance which he found it difficult to break; indeed, she said, I "gave myself the airs of a queen."

Not the least hint did she give Mrs. W—— of our engagement, which Carl had confided to his mother; but, with her great knowledge of social tactics, and with that touch of the old serpent which most managing women have, she contrived to influence Mrs. W——'s curiosity, and, by contrasting her *style* with my pretensions, to excite a spirit of rivalry in her breast, which might at last operate in her son's favor. She knew that the charming simplicity and unconsciousness of a young girl, apparently so defenceless and trusting, were no match for the scientific strategy of a widow—the skilful hyplay, the advance, the retreat, the lures, surprises, feints, and evasions with which they

play with their victims, and which so securely fasten them in their toils forever.

I said nothing to Carl of his mother's visit, and he did not know it, or he might have been prepared for the siege which was planned for taking the outworks, and, by a grand *coup de main*, gaining possession of his heart. I was too proud to complain, or to set a mother against the son of her love; and, indeed, I did not wish to gain him by any power but that of the free, full, and voluntary love which I believed to be mine. But daily, with the most exquisite tact, the most refined and complete *finesse*, my vulgar surroundings were contrasted with Mrs. W——'s elegant belongings, until, in my defiant pride, I longed to strike down all that was choice, beautiful, or rich, and on the ruins lie down and die.

When Mrs. Fergus drove with her son, she would pass our door, and invariably she would pull the check-rein to give an order, just as the narrow street was filled with the begrimed operatives rushing in scrambling haste to my mother's door. I knew Carl's proud heart, and how it must have been cut for me. Although he was always a gentleman, yet he had as much pride as ever fell to the lot of man, and he must have chafed sorely under these inflictions.

People who regard money as the end and aim of life seldom fail, and Mrs. Fergus knew that gold could carry in its retinue a wider homage than any other power. Whatever of love or tenderness there was in her nature was garnered in her child, her only son; his aggrandizement was the darling object of her existence. Shrewd, politic, and observant, this crafty woman knew too much directly to oppose her son's engagement, or to attack us openly; but where she could shock his refined sensibility, or touch his fastidiousness, by a contrast of my position with his own, she would do it; she left no means untried.

One wet morning, Carl came to us in our little parlor. My mother was occupied with some piece of homely needle-work, and my sisters were in their rooms. I was busy watching the misty rain as it formed little pools here and there on the rough pavement, which threw back, in bubbles, the perpetual plash. The scene out of doors was dismal enough. The trees on the street looked shivering in the damp air, and the wind that souged through the branches had a watery sound. I was in a sad reverie, for my intercourse with Carl was not what it had been; much that I have related here I knew not of until long afterwards; but I could guess what influences were operat-

ing against me. There are occasions in human life when people feel, although they cannot tell why, a strange sensation, as though some evil hung suspended over them; so I felt this morning; and when Carl told us he was about to accompany his mother and Mrs. W—— upon a journey which would last at least two months, I could not summon up resolution to say anything, for a rising in my throat choked me. It seemed as though the *ghost* only of departed happiness would be left with me. Who could tell what changes might be wrought in his feelings in this short time? I could guess *why* the journey was planned, and, had I dared, I would have let the great sigh in my heart escape, and have told Carl all I feared.

Carl was more like his old self than he had been for months, and he lingered as though loth to leave and afraid something might prevent our constant intercourse by letter. He made me promise to write very often, and said he should always be sure to give me notice of his changing address. If anything could reconcile me to his departure, it was the tenderness with which he treated me, and the hope he expressed that he should soon call me his own.

He left me, and I was indeed alone. The second day, I received a letter full of love and passionate petitions for me to keep my faith with him, although he knew I never went into society except when visiting at my sisters' houses. "Only believe," he said, "that I loved you for yourself alone, and that no mean thought ever sullied my devotion, and I am happy." He spoke often of Mrs. W——, and of her high appreciation of myself, although, as she told him, "my pride had always come between us, and prevented her from showing her true feelings towards me."

This went on for some weeks, and then Carl's letters; although quite as frequent, became shorter, and Mrs. W——'s name was never mentioned.

I put my trust in my own truth, and kept the balance of my conflicting anxieties steady and to myself as long as I could; but my mother, who constantly watched me, without any apparent reason, proposed my visiting my sister Caroline, in B——. I was strongly opposed to it, as my sister was residing at the West End, and lived a gay life, receiving much company; but my mother would not be denied, and, as I found my refusal gave her pain, I prepared to go, exacting a promise that my letters should be forwarded to me immediately.

As it was my sister's wish, while in B——, I accompanied her into society, and there I

met frequently the same gentleman who, at Saratoga, three years previously, had asked me to be his wife. He was still unmarried, and resumed his attentions to me, as a friend, in a quiet, gentlemanly way that could give me no offence.

It is the easiest of all things to break the link by which two human hearts are united. Its fragility is in proportion to its delicacy; and after several weeks of silence, in which I heard nothing from Carl, and received no replies to my letters, my mother wrote to me that he and Mrs. W—— were soon to be married. I wonder I did not go mad; but I did not; I looked my grief in the face, and lived through the struggle without betraying my anguish. I believe a pride and consciousness of power supported me. The heartlessness and obduracy of Carl's silence, while it racked me with bitter pangs, still, also, helped me to forget him. *Whatever* had happened, I felt that he ought to have apprised me of it; but, instead, he had treated me with a careless indifference that ruffled my pride, and then made me doubt his love.

I subsided into a tranquil state, perfectly calm upon the surface, but O how troubled beneath! As I accustomed myself to contemplate Carl's character in a new and despicable aspect, my grief imperceptibly softened, and something like scorn and resentment came to my relief. I even tried to persuade myself that, were he to return and sue again, I would reject him. Wrestling with this total blight of my hopes, I sank into a condition of utter apathy; there was nothing that pleased or disturbed me; and I went through the gay routine of life at my sister's with perfect indifference.

I was not without my conquests, and I was woman enough to feel elated at the idea that, although slighted and wronged where I loved, and looked down upon by Mrs. Fergus, yet there were others quite as wealthy, quite as aristocratic, who welcomed me as an equal.

My sister constantly urged me to accept Mr. S——, who again offered himself to me. I had loved Carl Fergus too well to replace his image in my heart by another; but I probed my soul to its utmost depths, and, desolate as I was, I resolved to hesitate no longer. Whichever way I turned, all was blank and lonely; there was nothing left to cling to. My marriage with Mr. S—— would at least bring happiness to others, for he scorned me not that I was poor and humble. He wished my mother and sisters to reside with him, and I believe never, for

had a great and noble heart, made them feel their dependence.

On the morning of my marriage to Mr. S—, I was conscious of something like a slight thrill of revenge. This was the vindication of my slighted feelings, the assertion of my outraged pride; and, if Mrs. Fergus could read the notice of my marriage, and feel that in depriving me of her son's love she had not driven me back to vulgar obscurity, but had only been an involuntary means of raising us *all* to a social position superior even to her own, I should be content. As for love in my heart, there was none; but I felt the utmost respect for my husband, and was proud of him. My mother gave up her hard life, and, with my two unmarried sisters, came to reside with me.

I hated the conventional pride that looked down with contempt upon obscure birth, its position, and its struggles, and it became a passion with me to raise myself to the utmost height of social position, and of course to place my mother and sisters there also. I made my house magnificent; but so exquisitely nice was my perception of the fitness of things, that no one was ever offended with its costliness or rare ornament. I gloried in scattering money about, and felt a sort of wonder when I saw to what a pinnacle of power and influence I was elevated, and I made the most of my advantages. I emerged from my pride, and condescended to try my powers of fascination upon the great world, until I felt I had conquered it. I was known at Saratoga and at Newport. I set the fashions, and saw myself courted and flattered by people who I knew would have spurned me with their foot when I was poor. I married my sisters in the great world, but happily, to men of their choice; and when my beautiful favorite, Mary, a perfect angel, robed in lace that was priceless, stood at the altar, and gave her hand, where her heart had long been given, to a foreign minister, I saw the dark face of Mrs. Fergus curiously gazing upon the scene, and I fixed her eye with my look of scornful, withering contempt.

My husband was proud of me, and denied me nothing. I was upon the topmost wave of popularity when I heard of Carl Fergus's marriage. Many and many a chance hour had my heart lived over its old memories, and I had often, with a shuddering doubt, thought of his estrangement and the sudden eclipse of his love, and felt that I ought to have cleared it up before I raised a barrier between us forever.

A year passed, and I heard nothing of Carl Fergus, for he had gone abroad with his bride;

and, as I lived in B—, all things appertaining to our life in L—, if not forgotten, were never mentioned.

My mother never went out into the great world, but she took the greatest delight in my success, and, I know, felt something of my own exultation at my position. I delighted to assemble at my house those who had, by their own talents and genius, worked their own way to success, and they always were my most honored guests.

After we had been married five years, Mr. S— was called away to France upon business, and, as I declined leaving my mother, who was now growing very feeble, he went alone. He was a most devoted husband, and I know he must oftentimes have thought me cold-hearted, for I could never bring myself to return his caresses, although always performing all my duties faithfully.

It was not many months after his departure, when, one night, I was roused from sleep by a distinct rap upon the wall near my bed. At first, I thought I must have been dreaming, and I raised myself upon my arm to listen. It was twice repeated, and I felt a subtle influence pervading the room, and heard the softest, most lingering strains of music, seemingly in the atmosphere, playing about me. A little startled, I sprang up, and passed to the adjoining room, occupied by my mother. She was awake, but, when I questioned her, had heard nothing. I thought of Carl Fergus, and the very same feelings came over me that I had felt before at Niagara. I knew there was something occurring in his life at that moment that brought him nearer to me. I returned to my bed without communicating my feelings to my mother, but the music continued until daylight, and was repeated several nights in succession.

My husband and Carl Fergus were upon their return from Europe, in the same steamer. On the night that I first heard the music, she took fire, and only twenty, out of a hundred and fifty, passengers were saved. My husband and Carl Fergus's wife both perished. I was stunned by the suddenness of the blow, and there was an undefined terror at my heart. I gathered up recollections of my marriage, and self-accusation came upon me. I had never half appreciated my husband's character, I thought, and when his will was discovered, in which he had left his immense property to me without reserve, I felt that I had slighted a noble heart. The shock was very great to my mother, and she only survived it a few weeks; thus I was left entirely to myself, and it was a long and

gloomy night that settled upon me, haunted by the ghosts of many hopes, many errors, and unavailing regrets. I truly mourned for him whose noble soul had found rest in the stormy sea, and for the mother whose martyr life had at length been crowned ; from the accumulated sadness into which I fell I had no hope of ever issuing again.

I left the city, and went to reside in the country, for I felt that nature soothed me, and I used to lay down my weary head upon the grass, and weep until a great relief came upon me in the shedding of those very tears. One evening, just before sunset, I came down into a little valley where often in my walks I had stopped to rest. One bright evening cloud floated midway along the horizon in the opening of the hills, and a sound of music seemed to come from it—it was the same I had heard before, and I *knew* Carl Fergus spoke to me. The quiet evening cloud grew dim, the colors faded from the sky, the shadows upon the hills became a part of the pale night sky ; yet I felt the shadows were clearing from my mind, and I knew that Carl and I were one in soul.

Weeks passed, when one day I was summoned below stairs, to meet a gentleman. It was Carl Fergus, and he sank on his knees before me, and, gathering me in his arms, held me tightly pressed to his heart. He had always loved, had never resigned me until my

letters ceased, and, after numerous epistles he had written had been returned unopened, weeks of suspense passed to him, when he heard of my brilliant career in B—— and my marriage. After that, to please his mother, and because he thought Mrs. W—— really attached to him, he had married her ; but, even as the husband of another, he had never ceased to love me, and had loved me unutterably.

In a week, we were married, and if there is a blessed union of souls on this earth, such is ours. I kneel down and say my prayer of thanks every night for the great blessings vouchsafed to me—a happy, luxurious home, kind friends, and two loving children. I have no longer any ambition to be the leader of fashion, but in all that is good and noble I strive to excel, and work side by side with my husband.

Mrs. Fergus intercepted our letters, through the aid of the servant who accompanied her, and Mrs. W—— was privy to it all. Carl's father, I believe, truly loves me, and is a real friend. His mother is proud of me, and for Carl's sake I receive her kindly, though I can never forget the misery she caused me. She is rejoiced at her son's second marriage, as his fortune and mine united have made her the mother of the richest man in the state—a poor ambition, but such an one only as she is capable of feeling.

the happy smiles from the brow, and bedew life's way with tears; yet, when the memory hovers over the past, there is no place in which it so delights to linger as the loved scene of childhood's home! It is the polar star of existence. What cheers the mariner, far away from his native land in a foreign port, or tossed upon the bounding billows as he paces the deck at midnight alone—what thoughts fill his breast? He is thinking of the loved ones far away at his own happy cottage; in his mind's eye he sees the smiling group seated around the cheerful fireside; in imagination he hears them uniting their voices in singing the sweet songs which he loves. He is anticipating the hour when he shall return to his native land, to greet those absent ones so dear to his heart.

Why rests that deep shade of sadness upon the stranger's brow, as he seats himself amid the family circle? He is surrounded by all the luxuries that wealth can afford; happy faces gather around him, and strive in vain to win a smile. Ah! he is thinking of his own sweet home; of the loved ones assembled in his own cheerful cot.

Why those tears which steal down the cheeks of that young and lovely girl as she mingles in the social circle? Ah! she is an orphan; she, too, had a happy home; its loved ones are now sleeping in the cold and silent tomb. The gentle mother who watched over her infancy, and hushed her to sleep with a lullaby which a mother only can sing, who, in girlhood days, taught her of the Saviour, and tuned her youthful voice to sing praises to His name, has gone to the mansions of joy above, and is mingling her songs, and tuning her golden harp with bright angels in heaven. Poor one! She is now left to thread the weary path of life, a lonely, homeless wanderer.

Thus it is in this changing world. The objects most dear are snatched away. We are deprived of the friends whom we most love, and our cherished home is rendered desolate. "Passing away" is engraved on all things earthly. But there is a home that knows no change, where separation never takes place, where the sorrowing ones of this world may obtain relief for all their griefs, and where the sighs and tears of earth are exchanged for unending songs of joy. This home is found in heaven.

In the shadowy past, there is one sweet reminiscence which the storms of life can never wither; it is the recollection of home. In the visioned future, there is one bright star whose lustre never fades; it is the hope of home—of a heavenly home.

HOME.

"Home, thy joys are passing lovely—
Joys no stranger hearts can tell!"

WHAT a charm rests upon the endearing name—my home! consecrated by domestic love, that golden key of human happiness. Without this, home would be like a temple stripped of its garlands. There a father welcomes with fond affection; a brother's kind sympathies comfort in the hour of distress, and assist in every trial; there a pious mother first taught the infant lips to lisp the name of Jesus! and there a loved sister dwells, the companion of early days.

Truly, if there is aught that is lovely here below, it is home—sweet home! It is like the oasis of the desert. The passing of our days may be painful; our path may be checkered by sorrow and care; unkindness and frowns may wither the joyousness of the heart, efface

RAYMOND.

TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH.

THE adventure which I am going to relate happened to a well-known literary man, whom I shall call by the name of Raymond, though no doubt his friends will not fail to recognize him by the absence of mind which formed one of his principal characteristics.

One morning, as Raymond was much engaged with his pen, the porter of the hotel entered. He came for the quarter's rent, according to the custom of Paris, which four times in a year elevates the porters to the dignity of receivers of rent. Now Raymond was not one of those starving poets who live in a garret, with little furniture besides a bed, a table, and a chair; on the contrary, he possessed an independent fortune, but, devoted to literature, and simple in his habits, he contented himself with a parlor, and bedroom opening into it, both plainly furnished. He paid his rent, gave the porter the usual gratuity, and returned to his writing.

In a minute or two he looked up, and was amazed to see the porter still standing there, and gazing around with a bewildered air.

"What is the matter?" said he. "Have I not paid enough?"

"Yes, sir; but I see no preparations for moving, and the new tenant has come with his furniture. You know he has a right to enter at half past twelve, and it is now more than half past eleven."

Then it flashed upon Raymond's mind that he had given notice to his landlord some weeks ago that he should change his lodgings when the quarter was out, and he had never thought of it since. He rushed into the street like a crazy man; but when there he recollected that it was too late to seek a lodging and remove to it in less than an hour, and that what pressed most was to get his furniture out of the way. He was on the point of going back to the house

to ask if he could not put it into some garret, when, by one of those chances which often come to the aid of those who cannot help themselves, an empty furniture wagon happened to pass at that moment. A bright idea struck Raymond; he hailed the wagoner, engaged him by the hour, and soon had his furniture placed on the wagon.

"Where shall I go?" said the man.

"Go on till I stop you. Drive slowly."

So the march proceeded; the driver went slowly, and Raymond walked along examining every house, to see if there was a notice to let on it. It was not an easy search; most of the best apartments had been taken, and of those that remained there was none that suited Raymond. One was too near the top of the house; the staircase leading to another was too narrow; in another the ceilings were too low; in another the rooms were too small; every one that he visited had some fault. Weary and dispirited, he yet continued his search till the sun was low in the west. He was tired and hungry; so was the driver; so were the horses; indeed the latter began to show signs of giving out, and the temper of the driver was not improved by the condition of his horses, and his own privations. He was put out of patience by Raymond's frequent hesitations, and Raymond himself thought he had little more time to lose; so he took the next lodging he came to, which combined most of the disadvantages of those he had rejected. The furniture was hastily put in, and Raymond sat down in the midst of the confusion to consider what was first to be done; but he came to the conclusion that he must go and refresh himself first; he therefore put the key in his pocket, inquired the way to the nearest restaurant, and went to get his supper.

After he had supped, he sat some time, not feeling inclined to renew his labors, preparatory for a night's rest, for he had not thought of engaging any assistance before he came out. But the urgency of the case soon drove him out, especially as he would not be sorry to get to bed and to sleep soon. Such, however, was not his good fortune; for on his way to his lodging he turned into a wrong street, and was soon entirely lost. What added to his confusion was that in the numerous streets through which he had passed he had completely lost the name of the one where he had taken rooms. In vain he tried to remember it; he could not betray his ignorance, and indeed what could he ask? He wandered about till a late hour, and then found himself in a part of the town he knew, not far from the residence of a friend,

and he determined to cast himself on his hospitality for a night, and renew his search in the daylight, when he hoped to be more successful.

He spent nearly the whole day in search of the street where he had deposited his furniture. He remembered, indeed, the quarter of Paris towards which he had gone, but nothing further; houses and streets danced before his sight in confusion. "I am in a pretty predicament," said he to himself; "if I should make my difficulty known to my friends, they would laugh at me, and, moreover, how could they help me? My furniture would be no great loss, but my books and papers would, and I should not like to have them fall into anybody's hands; but I have no means of discovering them. Really this would make a good episode in a novel. That idea took possession of his imagination, and he began to think over the various *denouements* which were familiar to his mind till the idea occurred to him that the police could assist his search. Accordingly, the next morning he went to the chief of the police, and said to him:—

"There is an individual named Raymond, who leads a very retired life, and writes a great deal. He professes to be only a literary man, and I do not know that he is a dangerous character; but the day before yesterday he left his lodgings without telling any person where he was going, and his most intimate friends have not been able to discover where he has hid himself, though they have spared no pains to find out. Such a departure is at least very suspicious, and I confess I am particularly interested in finding out where he is."

"He must have some sinister intentions," said the chief of police, "or else something must have happened to him. You may return in two days, by which time I will have discovered what is the matter."

The chief of police asked Raymond his name, but he did not choose to hear the question, and, saying he would call in two days, he left the office.

At the time specified, he returned, and the chief said to him:—

"We have found the residence of Raymond. It is in such a street and such a number"—naming it. "We found his apartment in great confusion, as if he had just moved his things. We examined his papers, but found nothing to implicate him. He must either have absconded on account of his debts, or something has happened to him; we will know in a few days."

“You need not,” said Raymond, “for I am
he.”

“You !” said the chief. “Why, then, have
you given all this trouble ?”

Raymond told his story in so amusing a
manner that the anger of the chief turned into
laughter. It got about, and was a jest against
him for some time.

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ROBERT GREY'S DARLING.

BY S. ANNIE FROST.

"WHEW! it is a bitter night!"

Dr. Grey drew his cloak closer round him, bent his head forward to avoid the wind which tore madly up the street, and, crunching the snow under his firm, manly tread, strode forward. It was a bitter night; dark, blustering, and terribly cold. There was no snow falling, but the ground was covered with a white mantle, frozen, even in freshly-made footprints.

Hark! The Doctor paused in his rapid walk. He was standing in front of the entrance to a narrow court, which, lighted by one lamp on the street, looked dismal and dirty—a very kingdom of poverty and wretchedness. Hark! A low, wailing cry; such a cry of concentrated misery and agony as makes the blood thrill with sympathy for even an unknown cause. Again and again that bitter wail, not loud, but, oh! heartrending in its anguished tones. The Doctor turned up the court, following the sounds. At first it seemed utterly empty. It was after midnight, and even these abodes of squalid poverty were preferable to the street on such a fearful night; so the inhabitants of the wretched houses were all within doors. All? No; there was one outside. Guided by the cry, Dr. Grey found, crouched down by the steps of one of the houses, a tiny figure.

"My child!" And a gentle hand was laid upon this outcast.

The child started to her feet, and would have darted away, but the same gentle hand detained her, firmly, but kindly, too. The rays of the street lamp fell across the entrance to the court full upon the child, and the Doctor shuddered to see bare feet, arms, and head, on this cold winter's night—a calico dress and a thin shawl were the only protection against the biting air.

"My child, what are you doing out here in the cold?"

A repetition of the cry which had at first attracted him was the only reply.

"What is the matter? Tell me!"

"I want mamma! oh, I want my mamma!" And, the grief once expressed in words, the child broke forth into bitter sobbing.

"Where is she?"

"They took her away in a box in a cart. Oh, I want her so bad!"

"Where do you live?"

"Nowhere!"

"Where did your mother live?"

"In here."

Dr. Grey knocked loudly at the door of the house indicated by the child's finger. He repeated the summons twice, and then a voice from an upper window called, "Hilloo! Who's there?"

"How came this child in the street on such a night?"

"I don't know. She's no child of mine. Mother died yesterday, buried to-day—pauper funeral. Somebody else took her room. That's all I know about it. Why don't somebody take her to the almshouse? Take her yourself." And the head was withdrawn from the window.

"You will perish here in the cold," said the Doctor, to the child, who had crouched down again in her old position. "Will you come with me?"

"Where? To mamma?"

"Should you like a nice warm supper, and to go to sleep by a fire?"

The child seemed awed by the magnificence of the proposal; but, after a moment's hesitation, said, "Yes."

Dr. Grey took her hand, and led her from the court. She was so tiny that the sight of the red feet running over the frozen ground, trying, in spite of the evident stiffness of her whole body, to keep pace with the Doctor's long strides, was too much for him. He stooped down, lifted the poor little figure in his strong arms, and, regardless of her dirty rags, he held her like a babe across his breast, folded the large cloak closely round her, and then resumed his rapid walk towards home.

Who was Dr. Grey? I thought you would ask that question.

Dr. Grey was, to use his sister's phrase, one of the leading physicians of Philadelphia, although, at the time my story opens, he had only just completed his thirty-ninth year. He followed his profession because he loved it, for his income, independent of his professional fees, was more than sufficient for his wants. Dr. Grey lived in a handsome house on W—— Street, with a housekeeper and one servant. He was a widower. For six years there had been with him, companion and wife, a gentle,

quiet woman, whose love was the joy of his existence, and whose loss, mourned now for three years, was irreparable. A little, blue-eyed girl, his only child, followed her mother in a few weeks, on her own fifth birthday. Was there a tender remembrance of this little one in the Doctor's mind as he took the poor, motherless child to his bosom? Need I say that Dr. Grey owned a warm, loving heart, full of generous impulses, purely philanthropic, and an open hand for charity?

Home at last! The servant and housekeeper, Mrs. Sullivan, were both asleep; but there was a large fire in the library, and the gas burned brightly. The Doctor placed his little charge in a large arm-chair, threw a shawl over the poor red feet, and then, after a long yawn and stretch, threw aside cloak and hat, and stood himself before the fire.

He was not handsome, this hero of mine; there was no classic profile, radiant orbs, or waving curls to make him attractive. He was very tall, yet his figure was so well-proportioned, his chest so full, shoulders so broad, and his motions so graceful, easy, and manly, that it was not until he stood contrasted with other men that his height was noticed. His face was an honest, good face, full of intellect, with large, heavily-marked features, a full blue eye, and a large mouth stocked with white, even teeth. The hair was light, and curled in tight, crisp curls. Altogether, such a face and figure as you, reader, would like if you were seeking a true friend and protector.

It was a strong contrast to this vigorous manliness, the little girl in the arm-chair, whose large, eager eyes were wandering over the room with wondering curiosity. She was so small, so very thin, with such a hungry, pinched look, that the Doctor felt his eyes moisten as he looked down upon her. Every feature of the little thin face was pinched and sharpened by cold, and her hair, cropped closely to the head, gave her a pitifully cold look, too. Looking out from such a wasted face, her eyes looked immensely large, and, being very dark, gave her an eager, almost wolfish expression.

"Are you hungry?" asked the Doctor.

"Almost starved! You promised me some supper if I came with you."

"Stay here, then, till I come back." And, lighting a candle, the Doctor went from the room.

He soon returned with a large bowlful of broken bread, over which he had poured warm milk. The child ate it like one famished, hastily, eagerly; and scraped the spoon round

the bowl after the last mouthful, as if as much more would be acceptable.

Dr. Grey wheeled her chair nearer the fire, and sat down beside her.

"Are you warm enough?"

"O yes!" And a sigh of intense satisfaction said more than the words. The tear stains were still on her poor little cheeks, but she neither cried nor sobbed now.

"What is your name?"

"'Darling' and 'You torment.'"

"What?"

"Mamma always called me 'Darling,' and the rest of the folks called me 'You torment,' or 'Little plague.'"

"But what is your real name?"

"I guess it's 'Darling.' Papa used to call me so; but he was taken away in a box, too. He took some stuff out of a bottle; I saw him. He thought I was asleep; but I wasn't. I read the name, 'Poison!' Mamma taught me to read; so I'm sure. We used to live in the country, it was nice there; but that was ever so long ago. Oh, please, sir, I'm warm now; won't you show me where they've put my mamma?"

Looking beyond the little wasted figure, Dr. Grey seemed to see a fair child's face, and hear a little pleading voice which had so often wrung his heart asking, "Papa, where is mamma?" A gush of tender memories for a moment almost overpowered him, then his resolve was taken. This child, so lonely, orphaned, outcast, and desolate, should be *his* charge. The Doctor bent over her, and kissed her forehead softly, saying—

"Your mamma cannot come to you again, my child. Will you be my little girl?"

"Your little girl! I had rather have mamma, indeed, sir."

"That cannot be, little one! You shall be my little girl. You shall have even her name;" and he said in a low, solemn voice the maiden name of his wife, and the name of his own darling, Ada Morton. "Will you remember Ada Morton?"

"Yes, I know, but—" then she hesitated.

"Well, child."

"If I am your little girl, won't you call me darling?" His pet name for his own blue-eyed child. A long pause, while the doctor sat silent. Then he rose, drew a sofa near the fire, placed the child upon it gently; covered her warmly with a heavy shawl, and having made her comfortable for the night, he kissed her again softly, and in a voice loving, tender

as her own mother's, he said : "Go to sleep now, darling."

In his own dreams, hovering ever near him, were two bright forms. One, fair and pure, in angel's guise, looking lovingly into his face, and beside her, clasping her hand, there was always a child's figure. Was it so? Do not kindly deeds, undertaken with Christian love and charity, bring near to us, waking or sleeping, the spirits of those called from our side here, to watch over us from above? God grant it may be so!

There was great consternation the next morning in the housekeeper's room, when the Doctor carried his little charge in to Mrs. Sullivan. Yet, when the skin was purified by a warm bath, and a suit of clean clothes which Esther, the servant, procured at a store where children's clothes were kept ready made, Mrs. Sullivan relented. The child was so subdued and quiet, and answered any questions with so much modesty, that the good woman was, at last, quite pleased. Ada, as we must call her now, had been the child evidently of people of education, for, in strange contrast to her late abode, and her own shabby attire, her language was correct, and her manner quiet and gentle.

Dr. Grey was in his office when his little charge knocked modestly at the door. Coming in quietly, in answer to his call, she went to his side, and slid a poor little wasted hand into his broad one.

"If you please, sir, the lady up stairs said I was to thank you. Am I to stay here?"

"Yes. Come up on my knee. So! You are to stay here until you get fat and rosy, and then you shall go to school. What is that around your neck?"

It was a piece of black ribbon, and Ada drew it out until a plain gold ring was seen suspended from it.

"The lady gave me the ribbon; I had it on astring. One of the men that took my mamma away pulled this ring off her finger and told me to keep it. He said it was mamma's wedding ring. I may keep it, mayn't I?"

"Certainly! My child, how old are you?"

"Thirteen! I was thirteen a little while ago, because mamma bought me a little cake out of the money for the shirts, and said it was her darling's thirteenth birthday. O dear! Mamma was sick the very next day, and all the money was spent, and we hadn't any fire, or anything to eat except some little scraps the people down stairs gave us. And when they took mamma away, one of the women took her clothes and mine, all except my oldest gown

and the little shawl, and sent me out in the street. She told me not to come back, but when it got dark I did go back, because"—and the poor little lip quivered—"I wanted mamma so bad."

Mrs. Marston, the Doctor's sister, smiled contemptuously at his proposal, a few days later, to place the child in her family, utterly refusing to allow her daughter Helen to suffer from contact with the little stranger. Ada would probably have remained with Mrs. Sullivan, but the Doctor decided to pay a long talked of visit to Europe, and he made his arrangements to place her at school during his absence. There was, however, one whole month of intercourse between the child and her adopted father. Gentle, winning, and intelligent, Ada found her way speedily to the Doctor's heart. "Darling" grew to be a familiar sound upon his lips once more, and her gentle voice never sounded sweeter than when her lips syllabled "Father."

Spring found Ada pleasantly placed in a large boarding-school, trying hard to fulfil the Doctor's parting injunction to study hard, and be quite an accomplished lady when he returned.

I must carry my readers forward over a space of seven years, and then introduce them again to the Doctor's home. In the parlor, near the fire, were seated three persons, Mrs. Marston, her daughter Helen, and our old friend Dr. Grey. The Doctor has been home from Europe only a few months. During his absence Mr. Marston, dying suddenly, left his widow and Helen poor, having lost in business even his wife's property, inherited, like her brother's, from their father. When the news reached Dr. Grey, then in Germany, he wrote to his sister to take possession of his house, and at the same time made ample provision of money for her comfort. Three years more he lingered in Europe, and came home to find his quiet house one of the leading mansions of fashion, with his sister and niece the gayest revellers of the circle who visited it. Always courteous and kind, he submitted to this infliction, even consenting to escort them out, and be lionized at home for a short time; at first this was very well, but it grew tiresome, and, thinking of the long letters written and received during his seven years' absence, his thoughts turned to the little child of his adoption with an intense longing. He loved and petted his beautiful niece, fondling her golden curls, and praising her bright beauty; but her frivolous pursuits,

showing mainly mind, and superficial accomplishments made her a poor companion for such a man as Dr. Grey, and he determined to call Ada home.

"It is almost time for the train," cried the Doctor, starting up: "I must go meet that child."

Mrs. Marston spoke: "She can get along well enough, I dare say! How you do go on about *that* girl."

For once the Doctor spoke sternly to his sister: "She is my adopted daughter. You will treat her as my child. Remember!" and he left the room, and a few moments later his sister knew that he had left the house by the echo of the street door closing.

The parlor clock must have been wrong, for Dr. Grey had scarcely left the house when a carriage drove up, trunks were brought into the entry, and then the parlor door opened.

Mrs. Marston looked up, and Helen rose. A tall graceful figure, in a travelling dress of dark-gray merino, a close bonnet and thick veil, came in. For an instant she hesitated, then advancing towards Mrs. Marston, she said—

"Mrs. Marston, I presume. Dr. Grey told me that you were here. I am Ada Morton."

"Pray be seated," said Mrs. Marston, taking no notice of Ada's outstretched hand; "Dr. Grey has just gone to the station to meet you."

Helen sank languidly back into her chair without any other greeting than a cool polite bow.

Chilled and disappointed, Ada sat down.

"Will you not take off your things?" said Mrs. Marston coldly, after a few moments of embarrassed silence.

Ada, finding the room oppressively warm, after the cold air outside, threw aside her bonnet and cloak. Seven years had changed the little frail child to a beautiful woman. Without perfect regularity of features, the dark eyes full of intellectual expression, and the beautifully shaped, sensitive mouth, with a clear complexion and rich healthy color, made her face, a lovely one to look upon. Soft full curls, short, and of a rich dark brown, shaded the face. The figure was tall and finely developed, with a ladylike graceful ease in every movement. Her hands white, well-shaped, and small, had one peculiarity, restlessness. Now, embarrassed, uneasy, and sorely wounded, Ada's face was grave and quiet, but the fingers of her delicate hands laced themselves together, separated, and were in perpetual motion.

The hall door opened suddenly, there was a quick manly tread across the entry, and then Dr. Grey opened the parlor door. Forgetting

the criticizing eyes fixed upon her, Ada had risen from her chair, and stood waiting. Dr. Grey gave one glance round the room, and then held out both hands to the young girl. As she placed hers within them, he drew her closely to him, printed one kiss only on her forehead, as he whispered "Darling!"

It was in vain for Ada to try to speak. Every time she attempted it, a flood of recollections, instances of the thoughtful care that had provided for every want for seven years, overcame her, and after a long, close, silent embrace, as the Doctor released her, she bent her head down over his hands, and sobbed with emotion.

Dr. Grey drew her again into his arms, and led her silently into the library, where, seven years before, he had first resolved to be her friend. Nobly had he fulfilled his then silent pledge. For a few moments he let her weep, then, placing her gently in an arm-chair, he softly stroked back the curls from the flushed face, saying—

"Try to compose yourself, my child. You are at home now, away from any annoyance. You are to be the comfort of my old age, is it not so, Ada?"

Ah, there was the smile he wished to see. There was certainly no sign of old age in his vigorous frame, and frank face.

"Can this be the little girl I sent to school, when I went away? Look up, Ada. So! The picture you sent me was very good, excellent, but the original surpasses my expectations. Dear me!"—and he drew himself erect—"I do begin to feel old with such a grown-up daughter."

Ada tried again to speak some words of gratitude, but her eyes filled up, and she could only press her lips upon the hand which clasped her own so fondly.

Seeing how it was, the Doctor drew up a chair and began to converse with her upon subjects not likely to affect her powerfully. He questioned her about her school life, referring to passages in her letters in a way which showed he had read them attentively, and was interested in their contents. He had been sure, from her correspondence, that her fine mind had improved every opportunity of cultivation, and every talent had been well applied, but now he found added to this, a graceful manner, a low-toned musical voice, a face with ever varying expression, and great conversational powers. He led her back to the parlor after three hours' conversation, well pleased with the child of his adoption.

Mrs. Marston and Helen, in the mean time, had consulted with dismay as to the probable influence of this intruder, as they considered her. Helen had always considered herself as her uncle's heiress, and Mrs. Marston looked upon the post of mistress in her brother's house as her position by right. They had expected to see an awkward school girl, whom they might put aside, order and control; but in the place of this, to see Ada a graceful, beautiful woman, as they were forced to own, entirely disconcerted them.

"Dear me, Helen!" said her mother, fretfully, "I don't see why you do not exert yourself more to please your Uncle Robert. If you were more devoted to him, he would not have brought this girl here, and then she would probably have married somebody, and been out of the way."

"It is of no use to look back," said Helen, languidly; "the mischief is done!"

"Not if you will try to gain some influence over your uncle. I do wish you would show some interest, Helen. I declare, for so brilliant and gay a girl as you are in society, you are very dull and stupid at home."

"What can I say? The girl is here; Uncle Robert will probably pet her to death; well, she is far more likely to marry here, amongst so many gentlemen, than in that out of the way place, where she went to school."

"I suppose we must introduce her into society."

"O yes. Uncle will probably insist upon that."

Dr. Grey did insist upon it. Never was his love for Ada shown so strongly as in this. It was so sweet, after his round of professional visits, to come home, find Ada waiting for him, and pass an hour or two in social chat, that it required no small amount of self-sacrifice to plead business letters or study as an excuse for insisting upon her going out with his sister and Helen. He could scarcely have told you how Ada made a change in his whole life, yet he felt it deeply. No daughter could have been more loving or dutiful. Mrs. Marston's time was so fully occupied with calls, parties, concerts, and the thousand engagements of a worldly woman, that she was but little at home.

The Doctor's library was the first room that brightened with Ada's presence. A woman's skilful fingers, guided by love and gratitude, soon gave the room an air of cosiness it had never before possessed. Each room he was in the habit of frequenting soon showed signs of the care of a woman of refined taste, and gra-

dually the Doctor yielded to her entreaties, and allowed her actual presence to add its brightness to his home.

Tea over, dressing-gown and slippers donned, Mrs. Marston and Helen either out or receiving company, and then the library brightened. Dr. Grey soon threw aside all business in the evenings, unless an unexpected call took him out, and Ada had little trouble in convincing him that she far preferred these quiet home pleasures to the most brilliant assemblies. A piano was added to the furniture of the library, and Dr. Grey found that, under the inspiring influence of a fine pianist and a rich, full, cultivated contralto voice, his own deep bass was still pure and strong, and could fill its place in a duet with great credit.

"I declare, little daughter, I am growing young again," he said, one evening, after a merry duet from *L'Elisire d'Amour*.

"Young again, papa! Why, you never were old!"

"O yes, I am. Forty-seven—double your age, and six over. Think of that!"

"Nonsense! You are as young and handsome as—as—well, positively, I cannot think of anybody so strong and splendid as Dr. Grey."

"Flatterer! Ada, I cannot return the compliment. You are not looking so well as you were when you first came home. Are you ill?"

"No; perfectly well."

"You are paler, and you have a trick of sighing. You are not in love?"

Ada laughed merrily.

"Well, what is it?"

"I—papa, sit down here, and let me take this low stool beside you. So! Now I will tell you why I am pale and sad. If I pain you, you are kind, and will forgive me."

"Why, Ada, what a prelude! I am afraid there is more in this than I thought."

Ada did not answer. She sat looking with a sad, earnest gaze into the Doctor's face for some minutes, and then whispered: "My friend, my benefactor, how can I leave you!"

"Leave me, Ada! Are you insane?"

"No; it must be so! I have lived a life of luxury and idleness too long; I must brave the world now, and repay your long years of love by applying the education you have given me to my own support."

"Ada, this is folly. Have I ever made you feel that you were not my own child? You are as dear to me."

"It is not that. I cannot tell you in words the depth of my gratitude, and, were we alone—"

"Ah, I see!"—and the Doctor's brow grew stern. "Mrs. Sullivan told me that my sister had insulted you more than once, yet I had hoped your own gentle sweetness would have disarmed her without my interference. Now—"

"Now, you will not let me be the cause of trouble between my kindest friend and his sister. You will let me go away where I can keep a little school, or teach music, and where you can sometimes come to see me."

"Never! You are my daughter by the strongest ties of love. Shall my daughter work while I have more than enough for her wants? No! Do not speak of this again, Ada; it pains me. Go to bed now; I have some letters to write."

"You are not angry?"

"Angry with you!"—and he drew her to his breast with a close, passionate embrace. "No, darling. Go, go now!" And he hurried her from the room.

Dr. Grey was a man of energy and strong will, charitable and kind; but, when roused, stern and bitter in his anger. As Ada was speaking, a fierce wrath had risen in his heart against his sister. He paced the library with hasty, impatient steps until this feeling was quieted, and then, sweeping across his heart, came a still deeper pain. He had known for some time, ever since her return from school, that his love for Ada had changed from the fatherly feeling he had at first felt, and that as he had loved his wife, Ada Morton, in his youth, with as deep, earnest a passion, he loved her namesake now. That she had been insulted, taunted with her dependence upon him, and that, too, by his sister, under his roof, goaded him past endurance. Still, above this was a keener pang. Ada loved him with a daughter's devotion, and he feared to disturb this trusting love by a declaration of his own passion. If she could not return it, he knew her pure, womanly heart too well to doubt that she would leave him. No! he must stifle back his love, keep the confidence so precious to him that she now bestowed, and, above all, he must guard her from a repetition of insult. A tap at the library door roused him from this train of painful reflection.

"Come in." And Mrs. Marston obeyed the summons.

"Following the thoughts which were still in his heart, Dr. Grey, without asking his sister's errand, spoke to her of Ada.

"Robert," said Mrs. Marston, "since you have opened this subject, allow me to speak. I cannot see you any longer the dupe of this base, designing girl, and not warn you. You look

upon her as your adopted child, your daughter. Are you blind, Robert Grey, that you cannot see that Ada Morton loves you; not as your daughter, but as your wife loved you once? She is using all her arts to win you to return this love. I have done my duty, and warned you. I leave you to reflect upon what I have said."

There was no answer. Dr. Grey was stunned, confused by his sister's warning. Mrs. Marston left the library, and he sat down again like a man in a dream. Could this be true? Was such unutterable happiness really in store for him? He could scarcely endure to wait till morning before ascertaining the truth of this assertion of his sister, but his habitual strong self-control kept even this flood of happiness in check, and, after a long self-communion, he went up to his own room, and fell into a deep, peaceful sleep.

Passing down the stairs to get a glass of water from the dining-room, Ada Morton, through the open door of the library, heard Mrs. Marston's voice, and one sentence reached her distinct and clear—"Are you blind, Robert Grey, that you cannot see that Ada Morton loves you; not as your daughter, but as your wife loved you once?"

Her secret, her secret that she had guarded and concealed as a woman guards nothing else save such a secret, spoken out thus! She flew up again to her own room, and, closing the door, tried to compose herself. How he must despise her! She looked back on the past year, for it was just one year since her return from school. O the terrible anguish and humiliation of that hour! She had given her love unsought; for not one word or action could she recall to warrant her in supposing that Robert Grey loved her save as his adopted daughter. How could she face him again, with the consciousness that he possessed her secret?

Dr. Grey breakfasted alone the next morning. Mrs. Marston and Helen never came down at that early hour; but, during the past year, Ada had always breakfasted with him. He waited for some time, in the hope that she would come down; but, as she did not appear, he sent the servant to say that he would like to speak to her before he went out.

"Miss Morton is out," said the servant, returning.

"Out!"

"Yes, sir. The bed ain't tumbled; I guess she went out last evening."

Putting the girl aside, Dr. Grey went up to Ada's room. A little note lay upon the dress-

ing-table, directed to himself. He tore it open, to read:—

MY FRIEND AND BENEFACTOR: Your sister has discovered and revealed to you the secret which, for the past year, I have most jealously guarded. I do not ask you to spare your contempt for a woman who has given her heart unsought. I can only repeat, for this is not a time to deny it, I love you! The tender gratitude of my childhood needed but the constant intercourse of the past year with your noble nature to ripen into such devotion as a woman feels but once in her life. Pity me, forgive me! I know how presumptuous it must seem to you that I, an outcast child, the object of your noble charity for so many years, should dare to place my love on a level with hers whose name you have given me. I cannot stay here to see your kind, fatherly love change to contemptuous pity. Do not seek me, for I can never return. To relieve any anxiety you may feel, let me add that, thanks to your liberality, I have a good stock of ready money, and also a certificate of ability to teach, from my former teacher. Farewell, my friend. Believe me, that always, through the lonely life now before me, the memory of the past year will be my sweetest solace. Farewell. ADA.

Last! Such bliss within his grasp, and lost again! That day, the next, for many days, weeks, months, Dr. Grey tried to obtain some clue to the wanderer's retreat. In vain! She seemed to have sunk into the earth, so completely had she disappeared. Finding his home utterly wearisome in Ada's absence, Dr. Grey took the occasion of Helen's marriage to a rich young broker, who had inherited a flourishing business from his father, to close his house; and, after settling an annuity upon his sister, who went to reside with Helen, he again left home to travel in Europe.

"Mamma, will our new governess come to-day?" said Minnie Hayes, nestling close to her mother's side.

"Yes, dear, I think so. Where is Laura?"

"Up stairs. Will Miss Morton go to St. Thomas with us?"

"Yes, dear, of course! Why, you know that."

Mrs. Hayes was a wealthy widow, who resided in St. Thomas. Being on a visit in New York, with her twin daughters, Minnie and Laura, she had advertised for a governess to accompany her on her return to the West Indies, and Ada Morton, from her quiet boarding-house in Philadelphia, had answered the advertisement. The

correspondence being satisfactory, Ada had accepted the situation, and while Robert Grey sought her in every place he could think of, she was on her way to St. Thomas, as governess to Mrs. Hayes' children.

Two years later, we find Ada seated on the open veranda of Mrs. Hayes' house, with her two little charges beside her. Two years had changed Ada. She was paler and sadder. Her life had been one of trial since she left Dr. Grey's. Mrs. Hayes, a spoiled child herself, was over-indulgent to her children, and disposed to lay the blame for every fault upon Ada. The thousand little trials of a teacher's life were made much more severe by the consciousness that each effort would be thought wrong, each motive misunderstood. The bitterness of memory tried her too. Every day of patient toil was followed by hours of sleepless thought, when the recollection of the kind care which had guarded her past life rose distinctly before her. An intense longing to hear the voice she loved so well, and see the kind, frank face of her first best friend, made her life almost unendurable. Yet these two years of discipline were probably the most useful of Ada's life. She had with her ever the one happy thought that she had acted with dignity and modesty, and every dollar earned by her own exertions seemed worth double the sums her adopted father's liberal hand had showered upon her.

"Miss Morton," said Laura, "tell us the story about the poor little girl again. She must have looked so funny without any clothes except rags."

"Miss Morton," said Minnie, "did you know that little girl?"

"Quite well, Minnie!"

"And she was very, very poor?"

"Without home, food, or clothes, Minnie."

"And the kind gentleman took her home and fed her on bread and milk. Wasn't he good, Miss Morton?"

"Oh, my, how she must have loved him!" cried Minnie.

Ada did not answer. The children discussed the story as far as she had told them, but their voices fell on her ear conveying no sense in their words. Back, back through the long vista of years to the night when Dr. Grey first met her. Oh, the many memories called up by the children's questions! Her reverie was broken by Mrs. Hayes' voice.

"Miss Morton, I wish you to come into the parlor for a few moments with the children. My old friend, Mr. Colton, is here, and wishes to see them. By the way, Miss Morton, have I

not heard you mention a Dr. Grey? Has he been travelling in Europe lately?"

"I have not heard!"

"Mr. Colton has with him a Dr. Grey, who has been travelling with him, and since his health has been so much broken, has tended him as a physician, and accompanied him here."

Ada's voice did not tremble as she replied—

"Pray excuse my coming in. The children will go, but I—I—my head aches badly."

Somewhat wondering at an objection made by one usually so obedient, Mrs. Hayes motioned the children to follow her. She apologized in the parlor for the long absence, and mentioned Miss Morton's indisposition as an excuse for bringing the children in, herself.

"Miss Morton!"

Dr. Grey started up. "Ill, did you say? I think I know the lady!" and without further preface the Doctor stepped out to satisfy himself.

Upon the veranda, faint, dizzy with emotion, Ada was trying to control herself sufficiently to go up stairs to avoid meeting her benefactor.

"Ada! my child! my love!"

The clear, well known voice in her ear. Strong firm hands raising her to clasp her to the heart over which she reigned. She looked into his face. There was no pity there, none of the contempt she had dreaded. Love and joy beamed from the kindly eyes, and in the music of the dear voice she could read the strong emotion of his heart. There was no question asked. Without one word of explanation Ada knew that she was beloved. She lay upon his breast quietly, happy, and for a time there was entire silence. Then he bent down over her, and whispered: "My wife, is it not?"

She answered only by laying her head down upon his breast, but they understood each other at last. They conversed for a long time, and his parting greeting when he at last left her was conveyed in one word only. He clasped her closely, and pressed his lips to hers, and then in a low voice said, softly, "Darling!"

SPRING WINDS.

BY ALICE B. HAVEN.

CHAPTER I.

Young trees root the faster for shaking.—BOGATZKY.

It was Augusta Colburn's monthly holiday ; that is to say, the third Friday in the month, when she was allowed to go home from Madame Arnaud's school and stay until the Monday following. A day on which all the regular boarders envied her, and came to the door to see her off, kissing her a great many times, and reiterating any quantity of commissions they had charged her with. She was an extremely popular girl, for these reasons : she was handsome, and always well dressed, with abundance of jewelry, and bonnets of the very latest style. Her father lived in a handsome house, and allowed her plenty of pocket money ; he kept a carriage also, and the carriage was at the door the afternoon in question, while the girls detained her in the hall.

"Don't forget to have that embroidery pattern stamped at Doubet's, there's a good child ; and some more of those pearl beads, you know, for that *gants sachet*."

"And my crimson floss, and a quarter of a pound of chocolates, you angel ;" that was her room-mate, Virginia Pryor, who was of course the devoted friend.

"Think of us, Gussy," groaned out Adelaide Rovenel, a Charlestonian, with large gray eyes, and a very elaborate style of hairdressing ; "pity us, shut up here with old Solfeggio and that everlasting ah, ah—ah, ah !"

"Yes, and the usual half slice of Charlotte Russe for dessert, to-morrow. Oh, how I envy you !"

"Is she gone ? Oh, I thought that stupid Italian lesson would never be over ! Don't forget those assorted chenilles, and a fancy basket, and the cherry satin to line it with," called out a breathless arrival from the recitation-room.

"I shall expect a note by the penny post, mind now"—and Virginia wound her arm about her friend's waist to go down the stone steps to the carriage with her. "It will be a perfect *age* till you get back."

"Not to me. I only wish you were going, too ; but I'll beg mamma to write a regular invitation next time, Madame is so strict. Good-by, darling !"

"Good-by, precious !"

Miss Colburn seated herself comfortably on the stone-colored, satin damask cushions, and called out, rather authoritatively for a school girl, "Drive on, Davis !" while Miss Pryor returned lingeringly to bondage, kissing her hand till there was not the least possible excuse to balance her pretty feet on the door-sill a moment longer. Miss Colburn's reflections were extremely agreeable, as the carriage rolled smoothly over Union Square. She thought of the good dinners—three of them—that awaited her ; of the shopping expedition for a winter bonnet with her mother the next morning ; she wondered what special present her father would surprise her with ; and whether the new drawing-room curtains had come home. Thinking of this, she put her head out of the window as the carriage turned into Madison Avenue. The drawing-room shutters were closed ; in fact, the whole house had a dull, shut up look, and there were two men raking tan in the middle of the street, directly in front of the house. She had a vague idea that tan was only used in cases of extreme illness. What could be the matter ?

"Davis, who is it ? Why didn't you tell me some one was sick ?"

"I thought you knew it, Miss ; it's the mistress, an' it's three days since she took sick."

Augusta had never questioned herself about loving her father and mother very much. Long ago, when they saw a great deal more of them, she could remember waking up in the night and crying, lest they should die and leave her alone in the world ; but of late years, every one seemed to go their own way in the Colburn family. Mr. Colburn was more and more absorbed in business ; Mrs. Colburn in shopping and visiting ; Arthur, her eldest brother, kept a horse, and had the billiard-room entirely to himself and his young companions ; Laura, the sister next to herself, passed a great deal of time in the country with their grandmother, for she was very delicate ; and the children had a French nurse and nursery-maid, and their own table. Augusta had seen less of her mother than ever since she had been entered at Madame Arnaud's as a regular boarder ; but when she was at home, she was petted and indulged, and greatly praised ; for Mrs. Colburn was grow-

ing proud of her fashionable-looking, stylish daughter.

A faint sickness swept over her for a moment as she inhaled the odor of the tan. Her mother must be very ill! Why had she not been sent for? She was almost afraid to ring, till Davis closed the carriage door gently, instead of its accustomed loud snap, and drove off towards the stable.

"How is mamma, William?"

The waiter looked a little bewildered. "Indeed I can't say, Miss Augusta; but two doctors has just been and gone, and it's the first day since I came to the house that it was twelve o'clock before Mr. Colburn went down town, and he isn't back yet. Shall the dinner go up?"

"Oh, I don't know, indeed! wait till he comes! O mother!" rose to her lips, like the sob of a child in the dark. It was the first time in all her life that trouble or sickness had cast a shadow on her path, and she hurried up the velvet carpeted stairs like one in an evil dream.

A strange nurse met her in the little dressing-room that adjoined her mother's chamber, and warned her back from the door. There was a subtle lingering atmosphere of drugs and restoratives that confirmed her apprehensions.

"It is Miss Colburn, I suppose," the nurse whispered, with an official gesture of silence. "I was to say that no danger was thought of till last night, or you would have been sent for."

"Is my mother very sick? Can't you let me see her? only one moment!"

"Not now; everything depends on quiet."

"Is there any change, nurse?"

Mr. Colburn had come up the stairs with the same hushed movement that pervaded the whole house. Even the ante-room had been darkened, and he did not see his daughter for a moment.

"Oh, papa, is she going to die?"

Mr. Colburn put his arm around his daughter, and kissed her forehead.

"We can't tell, Augusta; we don't know, my child! it's so sudden! Your poor mother—those poor little children! It's brain fever they think now, and we did not dream of danger till last night. Won't you go to the children?"

"Will you come and tell me all about it, papa?"

And with his gesture of assent she was forced to be content for the present. The nurse motioned her towards the open door, and closed it upon her, as she stood a moment in the dark

hall trying to understand this sudden calamity; and then she turned mechanically towards the nursery.

It was a suite of three rooms, extending back over the library and dining-room; for the house had been planned and built regardless of cost, and united every comfort and luxury. Certainly the little Colburns should have been happy children; they were, in their own way; but even their lives had become artificial, and they wanted constant change and excitement. The poor nursery-maid had a weary life of it; the *bonne* did her duty in chatting French with them, and arraying them in their costly little garments; in teasing Miss Lily's hair into curl, and bribing Master Morton to submit to a lengthened toilet that prepared him to go down Broadway on the carriage-box by Davis, who advanced his education in certain phases peculiar to grooms, while Marie lolled on the front seat with Miss Lily in her lap, as the horses pawed and stamped in the long line of vehicles that gave "Beck's" its aristocratic connection.

"Ah, Ciel! pauvre madame!" she commenced, as Augusta opened the door.

"Hush, Marie! poor little Lily; come to sister, Lily! Oh, Bridget, take that drum away from Morton; there must not be a breath of noise! Give Bridget the drum, and come and see sister, there's a good boy!"

"No, I will have it; and I'm going to ride on my rocking-horse, too, and go two-forty on the plank!"

"You dreadful boy! you will kill poor mamma!"

"I don't care. Davis is going to give me a ride on Arthur's horse, so he is. No—no—no—you sha'n't have it! let me alone! let me alone, or I'll kick you, so I will!"

It was a relief to hear that dinner was on the table. No one but Lily seemed to give her any comfort.

"Won't you take me to see mamma? Why doesn't she come and take me out to ride? Let Lily go, too!" And the little creature clung tightly to her sister's hand.

"I will come again, Lily—yes, indeed, I will; but I must go and see papa have his dinner now."

It was strangely unnatural to take her mother's place at the table, but her father seemed to expect it, and he talked much more than was usual for him, telling her how her mother first took the cold, as they supposed it to be, and what the doctors had said at their consultation, quite hopefully, for he would not look at the dark side. He had summoned the

best medical skill in town, and called in an experienced nurse. Now that the first shock was over, and sick-room routine organized, and Augusta at hand to see after the house and the children a little, his mind was greatly relieved of the burden it had borne the last three days.

Arthur was not at table, and was not even inquired for. He took his meals at all hours, just as it suited his own convenience; and, when Mr. Colburn, who could not bear the restraint of a sick-room long, subsided into his newspapers and *Merchant's Magazine*, it was dull enough for Augusta. The little ones were in bed. She could not settle her mind to read, and all her fancy work was left at school; there was the piano, but not to be opened, and she sat drearily enough before the fire, missing the eager outpouring of school plans and school incidents which her mother was always the recipient of on Friday evenings, and thinking how dreadful it would be if she never sat there again, and what would become of them all. Her father sat with a glass of ice-water on the table before him, and she noticed that he rose and refilled it more than once—that he coughed now and then, a short, dry cough, and seemed to look very thin and worn; but that was natural enough, when he was so anxious about her mother.

It was the commencement of a dreary time—four more such days, alternated by fears and hopes that only mocked the anxious watchers, ending in a sad certainty of the end, and then it came. Twice Augusta had been admitted to the darkened room, to see her mother breathing out her life in unconscious lethargy. Once more the door was opened for her, and this time all the family were gathered. The children were brought in to look wonderingly around, hushed for the moment by the unnatural quiet and the strange scene—their last dim recollection of a mother's presence. Arthur with a pale, horror-stricken face, at this, his first contact with death; Laura, just recalled, came clinging tightly to her sister's hand; Mr. Colburn mute, aged, and haggard by the watch of the night just past; and Augusta kneeling, with her head buried in her arms, trying to pray, struggling for self-control, and with the thought that she was motherless.

"Just gone, poor lady!" the nurse said, as the physician came in among them; and then she drew away, one by one, the pile of pillows that had supported that poor head, closely shorn of the glory of its flowing hair.

Augusta caught one startled glance of the

rigid outlines that made the face so strange, even to her children, and a shudder crept through her; she thought she might be dying, too. The room grew dim—her father's face wavered before her; she clutched at the drape of the bed, for she felt that she was slipping away from life; and then, when the whirling rush had ceased, she found herself on the couch in the dressing-room, and heard the doctor saying, "It is hard for her, poor girl, to be left so early with such heavy responsibilities." She had not strength to unclothe her eyes as yet, or to lift her hand to stay the stinging icy drops of water they were sprinkling on her face; but she wondered what he meant. She had only brooded before on the loneliness she would feel; she had not realized that any burden had been laid upon her the past dreadful week.

Prosperity had been a snare to Mrs. Colburn, but let us hope that it had not stolen away the seal of her heavenly birthright. There were many traces of the time when it had been very near and very precious to her; those who found them could trace a life distinct from that outward show which of late had seemed all-engrossing. There were written records of self-devotion, books well worn and carefully pencilled, that Augusta could remember seeing on her mother's work-table years ago, and these she took into her own room, with a half reverential, half superstitious feeling. Perhaps they would teach her how to be good, and prepare her to meet death when it came. Terrible mystery! it haunted her waking and sleeping, the horrors of the moment of dissolution and the uncertainty of all that lay beyond. It is true, there was a certain mingling of worldly and inconsistent feeling, especially when the servants began to come to her for orders, when she first went down, dressed in her new mourning, to receive the visits of condolence from the friends of the family. She realized the sudden accession of importance, even on her first meeting with Madame Arnaud and Virginia Pryor, who came almost immediately after the funeral. Madame was so deferential in her inquiries as to whether she would return to school, and Virginia, after they had kissed a great deal and cried a long time, holding each other's hands, found eyes to see how much taller and more womanly her friend seemed to have grown, and tried to console her by saying so.

"Oh, we all felt so dreadfully for you! You have no idea how we cried! Oh, how dreadfully shocked Adelaide and I were! We could not eat a mouthful of breakfast (Madame saw

it in the paper, you know)—could we, Madame?—and we got excused from ‘Middle Ages’ and German that morning; and Adelaide could not touch that beautiful night-gown *sachet* she had commenced like yours for days, it reminded her so of you. What will you do? How awfully lonesome it must be here! Oh, do come back!” The lively girl shrugged her shoulders, and looked down the long suite of rooms that had put on a straight, formal air for the funeral, and it had seemed to cling to them ever after.

Yes, it was lonely, very lonely, after the excitement had passed away, and the novelty of being her own mistress, and coming into possession of her mother’s elegant furs, and seeing all her jewelry and lace put up, with “Augusta Colburn” marked on the packages, had gone by. Her father stayed down town very late, and Arthur was never at home. The care of the children was irksome, because they disobeyed her, and Marie continued to have her own way in everything with regard to them. As to the house, it took care of itself. The servants were well trained, and very glaring discrepancies never manifested themselves, though the theft and squandering of the kitchen would have been revealed to a less liberal employer.

Still, it was a joyless, unsatisfactory life that Augusta lived that winter. She had her own hours of quiet thought, when she felt that unlimited novels and confections did bring satiety—when she saw that Arthur was no comfort to their father, and the children were growing very rude and untruthful under Marie’s rule. Her father, too, coughed more and more, and stooped like an old man. Sometimes he dozed away whole evenings in his easy-chair, and then again walked the floor restlessly, till long after every one else had retired for the night. She wanted to be different, less selfish, less idle, but she did not know how to begin. She tried reading the good books, her mother’s unconscious legacy, but they sounded like the dreariest abstractions, very far off from her daily life. It was not an ennobling one—indulging in morning naps until the latest possible moment; sitting with her feet on the fender, novel in hand, until lunch-time; driving down Broadway after that, and wasting money for every trifle that seized her fancy, tired of it, perhaps, before she reached home; coming home to be met by a sense of empty loneliness on the threshold, and giving way to low spirits and fretfulness by the time evening came. She drew a little, and embroidered a little, but there was no one to help her admire it, only Virginia, who was allowed to spend all

her monthly holidays in Madison Avenue now, and she did seem to care half as much about Virginia as she had done. There was a great gulf suddenly opened between her thoughtless school life and school companions and her present existence.

So it was that Augusta commenced her journal. It is a young girl’s habit, and belongs to the album age; very few keep up the practice when there is really anything to record. It comes from a restless, unsatisfied life, that has more yearning than endeavor, but one through which almost every thoughtful person passes, at the threshold of womanhood. It is not well to ridicule it merely, for it is the natural outgrowth of just wakened powers, before the objects on which they are to expend themselves are descried; but no crisis requires more judicious sympathy, lest it is encouraged into morbid sensitiveness by over fondness, or turned by jests or harshness into a well of concealed, but bitter water, that poisons every spring of feeling and action.

To this “misty morning land” the young girl had come, and she seemed destined to walk through it without aid or guidance. It was her eighteenth birthday. “February 28” was the date engraved on the bracelet her father had placed on her plate at breakfast. It was not so costly as his gifts usually were, but far more precious than any jewels in her eyes; she did not know that the light elastic strand of her mother’s hair had been woven by the rarest skill Paris could boast, or that the golden clasps had there received their delicate tracing from the engraver’s touch. Her love for her mother had arisen so silently, so hopelessly, that even her father did not know how much she valued this token of the dead; though he saw her lips tremble, and the tears come quickly into her eyes, as she looked up to him, when she recognized it.

“Many happy birthdays to you, my daughter!” he said, kindly; but he knew this was not a happy one. There had been many plans laid for it when the last one had been celebrated; Augusta was thinking of that when she set down the cup of coffee that she could not drink. Her father was silent, too; he remembered another birthday, when a little daughter had come to brighten a very humble but happy home, when he took the baby in his arms with a strange thrill of tenderness for the helpless little thing, and a prayer of thanksgiving that its mother’s life had been spared.

Augusta went to her room heavy hearted, and as she sat down by her little writing-table,

the special gift of her mother the year before, and looked from the bracelet on her arm to the picture over the mantle, she made herself a promise that she would live a more worthy life, and sealed it by a prayer for guidance to the Heavenly Father whose love she could not as yet discern, even dimly, in taking her mother's care away from her, just when it seemed to be most needed. She had yet to learn

"Our cedars must fall round us
Ere we see the light behind."

The date on the bracelet was the first entered in the little volume which we unclasp this morning, and read, not with idle curiosity, but that others may perhaps find a clue out of the labyrinth which spread around her.

February 28th, 18—.

My eighteenth birthday! Who could have believed that it would have been so sad? We were to have had a large party to-night, my coming-out party, and mamma even talked of the dress she should order for me; she wished it to be simple, but very elegant. I should have left school at New Year's, even if *this* had not happened, and papa thought it was useless for me to recommence; besides, he thought I ought to be in the house with the children, when he was absent so much. I might as well be miles away, for all the good I am to them. It is one of my *greatest* troubles. Morton is a very bad child indeed, and Lily is selfish and untruthful. Marie bribes them, and threatens them, I am sure, and keeps them from loving me, though I do get provoked and angry when I try to make them mind. I am almost frightened, sometimes, at the wicked feeling that makes me slap Lily, or push Morton away from me. He fell against the lounge yesterday, and ran screaming to Marie as soon as he could speak. I thought, "What if I had killed him or lamed him!" I have heard of such things. I believe, if I could send Marie off, I could do better with Bridget alone; but there must be some one to see to their clothes, and she does dress them so sweetly that I am always proud when people turn and look after the carriage. Besides, it would be a great pity to have their French broken up; they chatter now more easily than I ever shall with my four years at Madame's.

Then Arthur is very wild, Mrs. Gardnier says, and I ought to use my influence with him; I haven't any, I am sure. We always did disagree; he is dreadfully selfish. I never know where he is, and scarcely ever see him. How

can I influence him? Papa worries over him, or something; something more than just his loss of mamma troubles him. I have a terrible dread, lately, that papa is going to die, too. What would become of us all?

I had a letter from Laura this morning, with a pretty purse she had crocheted herself for my birthday. I let hers go by without remembering it; but she always thinks of everything; I suppose it is living with old people so much. I scarcely know Laura, she is so plain and so undemonstrative, and we have been so little together. I sometimes think she could help me, if she were here, but I don't know; I don't know that anything could. I don't know where to begin, there seems so much to do. I wish I had some one to go to with all my troubles, but grandma is such an old lady she could not understand, neither could papa; he always says, "Do just as you like, my dear;" and Mrs. Gardnier is too much of a gossip—I have heard poor mamma say that often enough. Poor mamma! dear mamma! oh, my heart aches to see you again! Cannot you speak to your child, to your lonely, lonely daughter? Oh, forgive me for all my selfishness, and all the trouble I gave you! I wish I was lying in Greenwood beside you, if I was only ready to die. How shall I begin? I do not see any way out of all these things that make me so fretful, and selfish, and useless!

March 5th.

I am getting old very fast now; I feel as if I must have gray hairs, or look pale and wrinkled. But my face has not altered; no, not a day older for all that has happened. This will not be my room any longer, and I do not know that I shall even have time to go on with my journal, that I meant to write in so regularly. Papa has failed. It is a dreadful thing, I know, and I have done nothing but cry since Friday night. Arthur came home very early—I did not know what to make of it—and he was so savage, a great deal more than usual. He flung his hat down on the table, and kicked poor Lion, his own dog, off the hearth-rug. Then he called out—"A pretty mess papa's gone and made of it! We must all go to the poor-house, I suppose."

"Oh, Arthur"—and I felt as I did when I first heard mamma had brain-fever, only worse—"that *can't* be papa!"

I thought right away of what had been in the papers in the morning, about some one who had cheated a railroad out of a great deal of money—some one, it said, who had stood so

high that they would not give the name until it was positively proved against him. I believe I felt as people do when they say "their blood curdles in their veins," and for a moment I was glad mamma was dead and in her grave. It would be a great deal worse than dying to see papa's name in all the papers, and, perhaps, have him shut up in prison, and not be able to reach him or help him. I did not have a thought about ourselves then, only for papa; and all this flashed through my mind before Arthur growled out—"I don't know what you mean by *that!*" Colburn & Gardnier have failed, if you know what it means. It was all over the street this afternoon, and Joe Bloodgood had the impudence to ask me about it, and offer to buy my horse!" And then he cursed him, a horrid, vulgar oath. They have always been so intimate, too. I almost felt that I did not love Arthur any more than if he had been a stranger then; but I thought of papa.

"Hasn't he got anything left, Arthur? Oh, what will he do!"

"Yes, I'd like to know; so would he, I guess. It's mighty little satisfaction to hear people say that he's given up every dollar! Nobody is expected to do that in these days; there isn't one man in ten thousand but saves enough to set himself agoing again."

"But he hasn't done anything wrong, has he? That's what I want to know. I don't care a bit about the rest."

"Ha, *don't* you!" said Arthur, in his provoking way. How like a bear he did look, in his rough overcoat, both legs stretched out over the rug, and his hands in his pockets! "I guess you will, my lady, when it comes to hard work and no wages. See how you'll like it!"

We neither of us heard papa come in, but there he stood, looking at Arthur in such a way! I don't wonder that he jumped up as if some one had struck him, and offered papa his own chair. "I can wait on myself, sir, as you will have to after this." I wouldn't have been in Arthur's place for a great, great deal. He slunk out of the room, just as Lion had done when he kicked him off the hearth-rug, and papa sat down, looking much more cheerful than I had expected, a great deal more cheerful than he has done in a long time. I wonder if it isn't a relief, when people have such things hanging over them, to have everybody else know it. Then papa talked to me quite as if I were a grown up woman, and told me all I could understand about it—how he hoped to pay all his debts and have something left, but perhaps that might not be. He said, he was

glad poor mamma was not here; for he was afraid she would have felt the change too greatly; but we were young, and it might be better for us in the end.

I don't see how it can be better to have such a great misfortune happen, and be obliged to sell everything, and go and live in the country. I never liked to make a long visit at grandmamma's, even, and to have to live out of town summer and winter seems dreadful. To do with one servant, too! I'm sure I never shall manage! But then anything is better than what I was afraid of first—if papa would only get over that dreadful cough. I know he went to see Dr. Clarke to-day about it.

(Conclusion next month.)

MISS SLIMMENS'S BOARDING-HOUSE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE TALLOW FAMILY."

(Continued from page 324.)



CHAPTER X.—(Concluded.)

You see, there's something in presentiments; never tell me again you don't believe in 'em. Why, that Professor hadn't been in the house more 'n twenty minutes—I had just had a little business conversation with him—and he'd gone back to the tavern to order his baggage over; and didn't I walk right up to this very room, and tell you you needn't cut into that bridal-robe, the very one you're wearing this instance, for, like as not, I should want it myself? Lucky for you I was too late, and I can't say I'm sorry, for maybe it would have been an ill omen for me to have put that on again. I only hope it will bring you better fortune than it did me.

I've learnt wisdom from experience. The Professor endeavored to persuade me to lend him a couple of hundred beforehand, but I wasn't to be fooled twice. "Never," said I, "until I am thine, and thine alone, shall I resign a penny of my money—not that I doubt thee, dearest, but I've reasons which I care not to explain." And though his brow was clouded for a moment, it cleared away, and he assured me that it was no longer of any consequence, only—and he looked so reproachfully that I almost blamed my own severity—only he thought I should have sufficient confidence

in my future husband to make him a trifling loan for a few days. I came very near doing it, but I didn't. I determined to have *him* first, and have him I shall in less than two hours.

Only to think of my being the bride of a real professor! I never expected to aspire to such an imminence. Mrs. Professor Lankton! me, Alvira Slimmens! Well, let them laugh that win; I've bin a good while about it, but I haven't taken up with a crooked stick, for all that. Poor Timothy Bethuen! I trust he isn't deeply disappointed; he's been wonderfully down in the mouth recently. What are you smiling at, Dora? He wasn't in love with *you*, was he? You needn't be afraid to confess, for nothing can now affect me unpleasantly.

There! the company has begun to arrive; I hear them crowding into the hall. And that's the minister. Bless us, child, don't tremble so; you'll disarrange your tournure. It's quite economical, making the same minister, and the same wedding-cake, and the same fuss and trouble answer for both. That's my *only* reason for having my own marriage take place so soon; otherwise, I should have postponed it until I had time to become more intimately acquainted with my future husband—not that I consider it a necessary caution, for a meeker or more

saintly-looking man I never saw than the Professor; his face is the convex of his character.

Hark! hear that Mehitable laughing and talking; it's all put on, every bit of it, to hide her jealousy. You might know that she'd be among the first to get here; I expect the day has seemed awful long to her. I've taken particular pains to ask everybody that has been spiteful in their remarks; the parlor, and bodoor, and dining-room will be crammed and jammed with people. I'm glad Mr. Little's sisters offered to receive the company; we'll have a chance to make so much better an impression, going down at the last, and sweeping in, and the minister proceeding with the ceremony immejitly. They're sweet girls, them new sisters of yours; they looked nice in them flounced tarletans to-night. Only think! do you remember, Dora, when we were dressed once before upon a similar occasion? But you were not quite so frustrated then as this time. O my, my heart is vascillating like a pendulum. Don't you hear it? *No mistake this time*; and it hasn't cost me any great outlay either, only I've promised to pay the parson, owing exclusively to the Professor's not receiving expected remittances, which was the cause of his wishing me to loan him money.

There they come, tapping at the door—our husbands, Dora! Do tell me if everything is right—quick! my padding! my powder! my veil! Law! I don't believe you see a thing, for all you stare at me so! Be more composed, you little goose, or you'll never get through the ceremony with the eclat which I desire to produce. Now, shall I unclothe the door? He! he! dearest, yes, we're quite ready. How do we look, Mr. Little? How do we look, Professor? Don't we make rather a pretty pair of brides? Be sure, now, you don't mar the effect by any mistakes. Oh, I know the ceremony from beginning to end; I've made it a study for the last few—years? he! he! Mr. Little, I believe you'd have your joke if you was going to the gallows. Has the minister come? I feel so queer, Professor, and yet this is the happiest moment of my existence. Do I lean too heavily upon your arm? I am so agitated I know not what I do. Come, Dora and Mr. Little; I suppose, as we are a trifle the eldest, we will proceed you. Now, all right; (*sotto voce*) no mistake *this time*.

Thank you, Mrs. Wheeler. Thank you, Mr. Wheeler. He! he! Do you really intend to salute the brides? I suppose it will be useless to resist. Thank you, Mr. Stebbins, I hope I

shall. Mrs. Stebbins. Miss Podd, Mr. Bethuen—he! he!—thank you. Miss Green, thank you; I really trust—What's that?

Put her out! put out that vile intruder, I say! Who dared to admit a strange woman into these apartments at this time? Why don't some of you men take her by the arm and push her out into the street, where she belongs? You the wife of my husband? You look like it, don't you?—ha! ha! His first and only lawful wife? I should like to know who was his lawful wife, if I wasn't; it isn't more than five minutes since the ceremony has been legally performed. And you dare to stand there, and—and—Professor Lankton, why don't you stamp upon that brazen creature? why don't you deny her infamous story? haven't you the spunk of a man? Then I'll at her myself. I'll tear your bonnet off your head, and scratch your eyes out, if you don't quit my house this minute—this minute, I say! Oh, you needn't fire up so, you little pale, sickly thing, you; I could shake your breath out of you, if I wanted to; but I won't demean myself. No, I won't demean myself; you can't provoke me to. This is my bridal eve, and I'm not going to do anything unladylike or improper. It's well for me that you arrived in this village as soon as you did? Is it!—ha! ha! You've got your marriage certificate in your pocket, and six living witnesses, in the shape of six of the Professor's children, at the hotel, besides? You can have him arrested for bigamy, can you? It isn't the first time you've caught him at his tricks? Famous for swindling deluded females out of their money? Makes his living out of his successes with women? Left you and the babies penniless? A nice story, and I suppose you expect me to believe it. Why don't you confront her, Professor? Professor Lankton—why, where has he gone to? Sneaking out, with your hat under your arm, are you, sir? Ha! ha! ha! don't you wish you had that two hundred dollars you tried to borrow? Got caught this time? Any officers at the door? Poor man! how scared he looks!—ha! ha! ha! I wish you joy of your wife and six young ones. Mrs. Professor Lankton, I wish you joy of this saintly being. Allow me to congratulate you upon your recovery. May your tender endearments console him for the loss of Alvira Slimmens and her little fortune! Spirituo-phycology is a very elevating science. Good-night, Professor; give my regards to your interesting little family.

Ha! ha! ha! have you shut the door on 'em, Mr. Little? A nice joke on the Professor,

wasn't it? I shall never forget how frightened he looked; I guess he's afraid of her nails, if she is little. Ha! ha! ha! he! he! he! I can't help laughing to think of it; it's quite an adventure—good enough to put in the papers. Perhaps Mr. Little has got another wife somewhere, Dora; you can't trust the male sex, you know. But we'll eat the wedding-cake, ladies and gentlemen. O yes, we won't be cheated out of the wedding-supper. Supposing you give us some music, Mr. Barker; music's very composing. Sing—sing—"This world is all a fleeting show!" Oh, Mr. Little, you're so funny; you are, really—he! he! Mehitable Green, what are you grinning at? do you see anything particularly amusing, allow me to inquire? That woman will drive me distracted yet. Go home! get out of my house, I say; you sha'n't have one speck or morsel of the wedding-feast. You've tormented me for years; how dare you laugh at me! There! see if you will start now! Oh, Dora, I beg your pardon; I didn't mean to have anything unpleasant take place on *your* bridal eve. I could have put up with my own disappointment, for I didn't set much store by that villain, any how; but that grinning, envious, ugly, malicious *old maid* threw me entirely off my guard. Stop crying, child, and laughing, too. I feel better since I pulled her wig off; and I'll go, now, and see if the coffee is steeping.

CHAPTER XI.

SHE GOES TO MARKET—DOMESTIC ECONOMY.

TEN o'clock. Susan, fly around with that ironing. You don't get on at all. You and Caturah together don't do as much as one girl ought to. Caturah, get on your bonnet, and bring the market-basket, and come along after me. I'm going to market, and we'll have to be in a hurry about it if we get anything in time for dinner. It's the best hour for going to market; all the choice things are taken, and, of course, I have to put up with the cheap pieces, whether I want to or not. You won't catch me giving my boarders sirloin roasts and porter-house steaks; it isn't what I keep boarders for. Hurry up, young one, with that basket.

Good-morning, Mr. Betts. What's the price of table-butter to-day? Twenty cents! humph! you must think we boarding-house keepers are made of gold. Give me some of your sixteen cent butter; I sha'n't take any other till it gets cheaper. Celery, hey? how much a bunch? Ninepence! haven't you any that's partly stale,

that you'd sell for less? Wilted celery is good enough for boarders; and mine haven't had any for so long they won't know the difference. It'll be a treat, if it is tough. Here's a lot I'm sure you couldn't dispose of to anybody else; I'll give you eight cents for it. Here, Caturah, take care of that celery; and mind you don't eat any, on the sly.

Yes, I *am* a little late this morning. Couldn't get off any earlier. All your best pieces gone? Sorry. Thought I'd have a roast to-day, but, since I can't have the sirloin, I won't have any. That neck piece will make a very good stew, with dumplings and potatoes. Potatoes are dreadful high. I'll have more dumplings than anything else, and that'll make a dish they can fill up on. I suppose I must get a little something besides, as some of my family won't eat stew any longer. No! no! I don't want any mutton-chops. What are fowls to-day? O my! I can't think of fowls, at that price. I should sink money, to give my boarders fowls. Pshaw! you aren't in earnest, asking tenpence a pound for leg of mutton! I'll tell you what I *will* take—a pound or two of that salt pork, just enough to season a basin of beans. Pork and beans are hearty, and cheaper than potatoes at six shillings a bushel. No, I don't want any cabbage; I've celery for to-day; it's extravagant, I know, but I don't mind it, once and a while; folks must be kept in a good humor, when they get to grumbling too hard.

Eggs? No, indeed. Don't go to poking eggs at me, for a month yet. Eggs in February! Why, you're crazy. Come to think, though, I'll take a quarter of a dozen. One of my boarders is sick, and he asked, this morning, if he couldn't have a dropped egg on a bit of toast. Two cents apiece, eh! Well, well, I shall charge him ten cents apiece for 'em cooked. No business to be sick and make trouble, if he doesn't expect to pay for it. Come along, Caturah. What keeps you lagging behind so? It's heavy, is it? not so heavy as it will be when these turnips are added.

Well, I believe we're through for to-day. Hurry up, child; that stew will be as tough as old Mehitable Green's flesh, if it doesn't get into the pot before long. I declare, I'm all out of breath—I don't believe my breath holds out the way it used to—and this rheumatiz in my ankle is coming but agreeable. There's Mr. Barker coming along the street. I'm going to pull my veil down; this cold weather wrinkles me up so; I know I look as old as Methuselah when I'm out in the wind. The town clock's

striking eleven, and we're just home. It's nothing but fret and stew from morning till night, and no chance of its ever being otherwise, as I see, since that scrape with that professor.

Here, Susan, get this meat over, this minute, and them beans; they've only two hours to do in. Don't wait to finish anything. I declare, if I believe you've ironed more'n six pieces since I went out. Caturah, take hold, and smooth them towels and napkins. Don't stand there with your hand on your side, making believe that basket was so dreadful heavy. Children out of the poor-house must expect to work, they're none too good; everybody wasn't born with a silver spoon in their mouth. For my part, I must trot up stairs and see that sick man; but I've this comfort—I charge him fifty cents every trip I make. I shouldn't want any better business than boarding sick folks. In the first place, I charge 'em regular price for board, and, as they don't eat anything, that's pretty much all clear gain. In the next place, what they *do* eat is all extra, and I charge an extra price for *that*. Next, every time the help goes up to see if there's anything wanted, it's a quarter of a dollar; and when I go to inquire how they're getting along, why, it's like the friend that calls at the doctor's office, it's fifty cents for a consultation. That man's bill was nine dollars, last week, and it'll be full as much this; and all he eat, put together, wouldn't keep a robin alive—a bit of dry toast and a cup of tea once or twice a day.

Well, Mr. Smith, how do you find yourself to-day? A little better, hey? I'm rejoiced to hear it from the bottom of my heart; for, if there's anything that's truly touching to the feelings, it is to see a fellow-creature suffering, especially when they're far from friends and home, though I trust this house will not seem altogether unlike home to you. I strive to make my family feel to home—especially the sick. Any appetite to-day? If there's any little delicacy which you crave, you shall have it, if it's to be found in Pennyville. I succeeded, after trying a long time, this morning, in procuring you some fresh eggs; they were awful high, but I didn't mind that. I'm glad to hear you feel as if you could partake of a little sustenance to-day; it's a favorable symptom that you'll now be adolescent. Though you must be *very* careful not to eat too much; that's the great danger, after a run of fever. I shouldn't be doing the part of a sister by you if I didn't warn you not to indulge your appetite. It'll be sharp as a razor, when you come

to get about again, and you'll have to keep it unsatisfied, if you don't want a prolapse. How's your head? A little vinegar on a cloth kept on your forrid would be cooling; shall I send some up? O no! I don't mind trouble, when a friend is suffering, and Caturah has nothing to do but run errands. Don't be afraid to speak out for whatever you want. Good-by. I'll bring your dinner up myself, if I can possibly find the leisure.

Twice in one day will be a dollar, and I shall charge him for the vinegar. I needn't feel any twinges of conscience, if he is a poor young man on a salary, who has to help his mother, for he'll eat me out of house and home when he gets around again. I shall try to scare him out of it as far as possible. I've seen people that couldn't eat enough, after such a spell as he's had.

I don't make so much as I did the first part of the winter; provisions are higher, and that shameful professor cheated me out of two weeks' board, and that other fellow ran away owing me seven dollars. Pork and beans! well, let 'em grumble if they're a mind to. It's lucky for me there isn't much competition in Pennyville; I can do about as I please. "Make hay while the sun shines" is my motto.

CHAPTER XII.

A NEW AND INTERESTING BOARDER.

You needn't slip that sewing out of sight, Dora; I saw what it was; and I don't know as you've any particular occasion to blush. You have been married nigh on to four months now, and it's about time to expect to see you drawing patterns on white flannel, and slipping linen-cambric into your work-basket, and pulling a piece of paper over it, when anybody comes in suddenly. Oh, you needn't deny it. A ruffled shirt-bosom for Mr. Little, is it?—he! he! Tell that to the moreens. I guess it'll turn out to be something for a little mister, instead of a Mr. Little. There, now! what would your husband say if he knew I'd beat him with his own weapons? That pun was as good as one of his'n. He's a pleasant man, your husband is, and I've always felt that making a match between you and him was one of the best things I ever did. It gives me solid comfort to reflect upon it.

I've come in to inquire if there's anything you can think of you'd like for dinner, as I've noticed your appetite was rather changeable recently, and to tell you that I've got a new

boarder. He's selected the room back of Mr. Bethuen's, although it's small, because it looks down on Squire Walden's flower-garden. He says he's so fond of flowers! and when you come to see him, you'll believe him, for a sweeter appearing young man I never saw; and he has such a beautiful name, too—Edgar Clarence Evelyn! Doesn't *that* sound like a novel? He doesn't seem to be more than twenty years old, and his hair curls around his temples, and his cheeks are as red as a girl's. He says he thinks he shall remain all summer in Pennyville; that he's just come here to get away from city life and from something that troubles him, and all he wants is a pleasant place to walk out, and a nice, quiet room, where there's a few trees in sight and some flowers. And oh, he's so melancholy, and so pensile, and so attracting to one's imagination! I've made all kinds of stories up about him already. I suppose he's been disappointed in his first love, and has fled from painful memories; or, perhaps, the lady has a cruel father, and he keeps her from him because he's poor; but he can't be poor, either, for his clothes was exquisite, and he'd plenty of gold that he kept in his pocket as if it was only so much silver or pennies. Or, perhaps he's never been in love with anybody, but has read in poetry about the rusty beauty of village maidens, and has just come here to seek for adventures; yet I don't think that is it, or he wouldn't have hinted that he had trouble on his mind, as he did when he looked down on the laylocks and tulips in the Squire's garden, and said "flowers were sweet comforters, and drove painful thoughts away." I can hardly wait till dinner-time for you to see him. He's altogether the most deeply interesting young gentleman I've ever met; I never hoped nor dreamed that the village of Pennyville and Alvira Slimmens's boarding-house would give shelter to such a beautiful and mysterious being. I feel that I can neither eat nor sleep until I obtain some glimpse of his history. If it wasn't dishonorable, and I hadn't become a member of the church this spring, I should be tempted to peep into his trunk when he was out, and see if he had any letters or daguerreotypes, or anything that would give us the clue.

Do you think it inconsistent with my character as a professing Christian to manifest so deep an interest in any young man before I know whether he belongs to the world or not? He looks just as innocent as a child; his eyes are as blue as them johnny-jump-ups in your

vase there. I thought I never should write any other than sacred poetry hereafter—that my talents should be desecrated exclusively to hymns and psalms; but if I should discover that he keeps an album, I don't know as I should have the moral turpitude to refrain from adding a few, a very few verses to its pages. Mr. Bethuen might be displeased if he should ascertain it; but, somehow, I don't think as much of Timothy Bethuen's opinion as I used to, even a week ago. He's a very good young man; his character is unscrupulous; nobody can cast a shadow upon that; but he's desperately humbly, and he has *no* air about him; he's destitute of style, and his hair is as straight and as stiff as a broom, and jest about the color. I've boarded him cheap, and I've encouraged him in every way that lay in my power, because I felt in so doing I was helping on the good cause; I did it in a missionary spirit exclusively. They say that charity begins at home, and I believe the education of young men for the ministry is a good work, and I've did my part by this one. I've stitched his collars, and made his clothes hold out twice as long as they would if I hadn't have mended 'em; but all that isn't denying that he's an awful plain young man. I'm afraid he'll never cut much of a figure in the pulpit. Poor Timothy! he hasn't the gift of tongues. Maybe I shall be the means of bringing Mr. Evelyn to grace; if I should, what a splendid instrument he would make for the conversion of thoughtless and heedless young women! There wouldn't be a female in Pennyville but what would come into the flock. I'm sure he would make a second Splurgeon. Perhaps it's going to be revealed to me that this is my mission. Would you believe, he never even asked me the price of board, but engaged his room at once, just because he liked it, without a single pecuniary consideration; so I can charge my own terms, which shows how generous and unexperienced in the ways of the world he is. Alvira Slimmens, however, isn't the person to take advantage of unsuspecting innocence; I sha'n't ask him but half a dollar more than I should if the terms had been agreed on. There's only one thing I regret. Belle Walden's room looks right down into the garden, and she's setting at her window half her time, this pleasant weather, singing, and sewing, and pulling at them rose-vines, and twisting her curls over her fingers, the idle thing, as if she'd no duties to perform and no serious thoughts of anything, because her father is rich and she's handsome. I don't know of

any harm she'd do Mr. Evelyn, only she might distract his thoughts from higher things, in case I should feel it my duty to endeavor to convert him. I'm most sorry he picked out that room, since I've come to think about Belle. She's no modesty about her, or, if she has, it's swallowed up in vanity; and if she should find out what a charming young man there was there, she'd be at her window more'n ever, pretending she never saw him, and making herself as pretty as she could all the time. I'll keep a sharp eye on that girl, if I have to set up in the attic and peek through a hole to do it; and if I discover anything the least improper, I shall feel bound to let her mother know how things are going on. Bless me! how time does run on! I must curl my hair before dinner, and change my dress. You didn't say what you'd like, and I sha'n't tell you beforehand that I'm going to have sparrow-grass on toast, for I know that's what you've been a-wanting this three days. Be sure and come down to the table, for I want the facility of introducing you to my new boarder, Edgar Clarence Evelyn, the mysterious stranger!

There! it's just as I expected! There's that giddy girl making signs out of her window already, actually kissing her hand over this way, and he hasn't been in the house a week yet. Well, I never! I'm glad I stole up here, if it is rather dusty, and rubbed off this pane of glass, so I can have a good view of what's going on. She ought to be ashamed of herself. Now, then, what's the meaning of that? Talking with her fingers, as sure as my name is Alvira Slimmens! I'll put a stop to such proceedings, if they're carried on much longer, by just putting on my bonnet, and stepping round and letting her mother know what's transpiring under her very nose without her seeing it. Such an indelicate, bold, immodest creature! a perfect stranger, and throwing kisses to him out of a back window! I wish I understood the deaf-and-dumb alphabet; I'd find out what mischief was afoot. I wonder where *she* learnt it; of course, at that seminary. Young girls are just sent away to school nowadays to learn all kinds of mischief and carry on all kinds of capers. I'll stay in this garret as long as she keeps at that window, if it's till tea-time. I hope and pray it ain't anybody she got acquainted with at that Seminary, and that has followed her to Pennyville in this romantic manner. It would make a very pretty story, 'specially if there should be an elopement; but it wouldn't agree with *my* plans. Just see that

saucy jade! I declare I can hardly retain myself!

Humph! there's her brother coming into her room; he's at the window, too, pulling Belle's hair, and cutting up as wild as usual. How quick Mr. Evelyn shoved his chair back out of sight; I heard it scraping over the carpet. No doubt he's *very* busy just now, reading "Lalla Rook" or making pictures in that book of his. It looks suspicious to see him getting out of sight when her brother makes his appearance. I'm afraid it's a love affair! If I make up my mind, certainly, without doubt, that it is, I'll put a flea in Mrs. Waldon's ear—I shall only be doing a Christian and neighborly deed to let her know about such goings on.

I expect Susan's doing them pies dreadful, and Caturah's out there in the yard, throwing stones at the chickens, instead of keeping at them dried apples, as I told her to; but I'm not going down, if the hull house goes to wrack and ruin, as long as that forward chit stays at that window; I've too great a regard for Mrs. Waldon. If she *only* knew who was peeking at her through a cracked pane of glass in a garret window, she'd be a trifle more careful how she flirted and carried on. For the land's sake! what are they laughing at? both of 'em! How I wish I could see through this floor! It's something that fellow is doing at his window; they're both looking over here and laughing to kill. I wish I was peeking through the keyhole of his apartment.

He almost always takes a walk after tea, and I'm going to slip into his room when he's out and ascertain if I can discover anything, provided he don't lock his door, which he always does. As luck will have it, I believe the key to my clothes-closet fits that very door, which is all the better for me. He'll never dream any one's been in, and I can go whenever he isn't about. There, she's beat a retreat at last—putting on her bonnet to go out—and I can go and overhaul that Caturah, provided I don't break my neck getting down.

How sweet he did look, as he stepped down the front steps, with that bunch of violets stuck in his buttonhole, and looking back and kissing his hand to me with that smile of his. It set my heart to oscillating so, it hasn't got over it yet. Ah me! I'm infatuated with that young man, perfectly infatuated, and I can't help it, if I did join the church to please Timothy Bethuen. Yes, this key just fits. He won't be out less than half an hour, which'll give me time to take a good look. Now, then, let me see how my Ed-

gar Clarence passes his precious time. Here's books—"Byron," "Moore," "Mrs. Browning," "Longfellow," "Kate in Search of a Husband," "Devereaux," "The Wide, Wide World," "Jane Eyre," "Consuelo," "Corinne," "Dombey & Son." My, how romantic! novels, and poetry, and two books in French, and here's an album; yes, but it isn't his own, it's some young lady's, that has lent it to him to write in, for here's the name—"Miss Helen Howitt." It isn't Belle Waldon's, any way, and that's some comfort.

My, what a little foot he's got! that's the sweetest pair of boots I ever saw, and them slippers would fit a girl. He don't appear to have any bad habits; there are no pipes, nor inershams, nor smell of tobacco about; and his bed and his room are as neat as a woman's. O my, if this isn't curious; here's a thimble, a little gold thimble, with them same initials on, "H. H." *That* girl must be crazy after him, to let him carry off her thimble; and bless me, if he hasn't been using it! He's sewed that button on to that shirt as well as I could have done it. What a darling shirt that is! the ruffle is linen-cambric as fine as a handkerchief, and them sweet little turquoise buttons! I could kiss it, just as it lays there on the table. Here's a bouquet, all faded and dead; of course he'd never miss it, and I could take it and keep it as a sovereign of his stay at my boarding-house. If that album was his own, I would write some verses in it, some time when he was out, and he'd never know who did it or how they came there, unless it was by clairvoyage. I mean to inscribe some lines on a nice sheet of paper, and slip 'em under the door. And here's a blank book all full of drawings as good as any that portrait-painter that boarded here awhile could make—faces, and flowers, and trees, and eyes and noses, and chairs, and landscapes; he's got every accomplishment under the sun. I do think he isn't much short of a cherub of light. Ah, ha! here's a profile of Belle Waldon! that's what he was about, and maybe he showed it to 'em when they laughed. He's made her full as handsome as she is! And here's—is that his voice I hear in the hall? bless me, how quick he's returned. I'm so flurried I'll never get this door locked. I hope I left them things as I found 'em. There, it's locked at last. Oh, Mr. Evelyn, is that you? did you just come from your apartment, or have you been out for your customary walk? He! he! thank you! I shall be *very* happy, certainly, to accompany you the next time you go out. I'm *well* acquainted with all the most

seclusive and attracting parts of our village. I often seek its sequestered glades at this season of the year, when the robins begin to warble and the flowers to spring. Youth has ever its own congenial tastes. I sympathize with the frisking lambs and the sweet little bluebirds. But I am retaining you from twilight reveries. Come down to my bodoor, do! whenever you feel like it; I shall be there this evening. Did I not hear you drumming upon my guitar? I'm sure you play; I should esteem it a great treat to have you make free use of it. Remember! this evening, I shall be "at home" in Alvira's bodoor.

I've got them verses done at last, and I think they're the best I ever writ. I don't think any of the lines I dedicated to that heartless Cambric student were equal to these. I shall copy them off very carefully and slip 'em under the door of his room, and leave him to guess where they came from. I believe I was transpired when I wrote that poem. It'll have its effect, if anything can, 'specially when it's enveloped in so much mystery. Getting it from he don't know who and he can't tell how, finding it under his door or on his table, will give it an air of interest which will add to its effect. Pink or blue? which shall it be? Blue is true, and pink is a declaration of love. I believe I'll choose the pink. He plays the guitar like a melodeon; and I'm sure he meant something when he read those lines to me last night. I must finish these before I seek the retireacy of my bed, if this rheumatiz in my hand don't spoil my writing.